THE VOLITIONAL ELEMENT IN KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF

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The volitional element in
knowledge and belief

THE VOLITIONAL ELEMENT IN KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF

AND OTHER ESSAYS IN PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

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BY

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PRESIDENT DE PAUW UNIVERSITY

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TO

THE MEMORY OF

BORDEN PARKER BOWNE

SCHOLAR, THEOLOGIAN, PHILOSOPHER,

WHO FIRST TAUGHT US THE IDEALISTIC WAY OF

INTERPRETING MAN, THE WORLD AND GOD AND

THEIR MUTUAL RELATIONS, THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED

BY THE AUTHOR

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INTRODUCTION

This volume of essays is in general in line with the philosophic principles of the late Dr. Borden P. Bowne. The very title of the essay which gives the book its name, "The Volitional Element in Knowledge and Belief," would indicate kinship with the Bowne philosophy. Dr. Bowne possessed in a singular degree the power of rousing his followers to think on their own account and to carry out his principles in applying his implications in fields beyond the strictly philosophical. He used to feel that his philosophy had significance for all departments of Christian thinking and practice. If he had lived he would have been glad to see the use which Dean Grover has made of one of his fundamental conceptions, namely, the significance of will for Christian belief.

We are coming to see in these latter days that the Christian system does not depend for its chief basis upon formal argument. This does not mean that the formal arguments for Christianity are not better than the formal arguments against Christianity. Christianity is not to be overthrown by argument. On the other hand, however, it is not to find its firmest foundation in argument. Strict argument leaves us many times with a drawn battle. The will must come in to make a choice and the satisfaction

which follows the choice of the Christian position is the real argument for Christianity.

This does not mean however that Christianity is to dispense with thinking to make clear, first of all, the presuppositions of the Christian system. Dean Grover has done well to point out the fact that all thinking, of whatever sort, proceeds upon assumption. Assumption is inevitable, but we must know when we are assuming and when we are reasoning upon what has been assumed. Works like this volume of essays have large value in that they train the mind to see just what assumption is necessary and then to guard the mind against thinking that assumption is reasoning or that reasoning can take the place of or do without assumption. The one difficulty with present day "Pragmatism" is that in the hands of many disciples it results in general looseness of intellectual procedure. The leaders of the pragmatic movement have of course not intended this result. The will to believe is all-essential but the will must be an enlightened one, making its choices rationally and reasoning about them in a logical manner.

Just at present Pragmatism is the order of the day in Christian thinking. Correctly understood this principle is nothing more or less than the philosophical statement of the truth that those who will to do the will of God shall know the doctrine of Christ. The system is open to ridiculous excesses however and harmful

abuses. There is danger in the new movement that the claims of strict logic and scholarship will at many points be over-ridden. The total effect of reading Dean Grover's book will be to guard against the extremes and the aberrations of the movement.

The other essays in the volume deal some with critical and some with practical matters. We believe that the careful reading of them will tend to the intellectual strengthening and the doctrinal upbuilding of believers.

May the essays be widely read, especially among ministers! Those who read these essays will not only get thorough and solid instruction but will also gain an impulse toward that intelligent and critical thoughtfulness without which spiritual zeal cannot accomplish the best results.

Francis J. McConnell.

PREFACE

There is nothing more pressing in the thought activities of our time than the bringing into true perspective the matter of presuppositions in Philosophy and Religion. The really significant philosophical and religious thinking of our time is, in all cases where the thinking is consistent, based upon the appropriate presuppositions.

A root idea, not particularly original with the author, which underlies the following essays, is that these presuppositions which are so determinative for all our thinking and for all our conclusions are largely a matter of the will; that is, the mental response to the soul's environment which these represent is practical, passional, volitional.

Philosophical theory is determined in character and speculative significance by its presuppositions touching two questions. First, is thinking and knowing an active process representing the self-directed working of a unitary and abiding ego, or is it a passive process representing the reaction which something which may be variously styled brain, mind, substance or inner life makes against something which may be variously styled nerve stimuli, sensation or the outer world? The philosophers of this generation see more clearly than ever what a long train of consequences for moral and speculative theory

follow upon the answer to this question. What the answer shall be is, at the first and at the last, with more or less analytical reflection thrown between, determined volitionally. The present author holds it as a rational presupposition that thinking and knowing represent the self-activity of a unitary and abiding ego.

A second question, the answer to which is equally determinative for philosophical theory, runs as follows: Is fundamental being to be regarded as intelligent, free, purposive, self-existent embodiment of the principle of efficient causation, or is it non-intelligent, non-purposive, non-causal, essentially an unknowing and unknowable somewhat of which nothing can be affirmed and nothing denied? Upon a thinker's answer to this question will depend the trend and outcome of all his *logical* reasoning in metaphysical theory. Here also will follow important speculative consequences touching the problems of thought and knowledge and the bases of religion. It is a conviction with the author that fundamental being can be found nowhere short of free intelligence, self-existent, the constant and unfailing creator and up-holder of all that is, the World-ground, the Absolute, the Christian's God. If something less than this is to be accepted as rational presupposition in metaphysical theory, nevertheless the author can not begin with any metaphysical presupposition, touching fundamental being, short of self-existent, causal

intelligence if, upon reflection, he hopes to reach any very valuable conclusion. The primary acceptance of such presupposition is volitional. Afterwards it is supported by processes of analytical reflection which, other assumptions being freely made, shut our thought up to accept it or nothing. Then follows with the present author its final acceptance, which in the last analysis is free, rational, volitional.

All persons whose thinking is worth while and whose interpretations have significance are consciously or unconsciously on one side of the philosophical debate as determined by their voluntarily accepted presuppositions. In all completed theory the conclusions of philosophy become the presuppositions of religion. Religious life and theory in all stages of their development are moulded according to some more or less clearly accepted philosophical conclusions concerning man, the world and the world-ground, and the relations of these to each other. This is as true of the undeveloped savage as of the man of civilization. It is natural for man, savage or civilized, to have a philosophy, that is, a way of looking at things, a way of interpreting himself, the world and the ground of both. Philosophy is not yet perfected, but it is a far cry from the metaphysics of idealism to that of the totemism or animism of the savage. Man has not yet attained the last word in philosophy or religion, but he presses on toward the goal.

Professor Bowne says of philosophy that it is "militant, not triumphant." The same is true also of religion.

Among the author's presuppositions in religion underlying the following essays are these: Man has a body and he is a soul. He has all his being in the constant will of infinite free intelligence. Man can only be adequately explained as a free person created in the image of the only God. The only real explanation of the world of fact and reason is found also in God.

God is the only one completely personal, that is, whose powers of self-direction are only limited by the laws of reason which are the laws of his own nature. Nor has God created the world of finite persons and matter with which we are familiar and then withdrawn Himself to some hypothetical somewhere from which point of view He may now look upon the vicissitudes of His own created world. God is immanently present in all His world in creative power and constant special care and oversight.

Finally, religion is most helpfully conceived, as Henry Churchill King has so ably shown, in terms of personal relationship. It is believed that the power of religion to redeem and transform a sin-discouraged humanity is to-day more generally than before seen to begin and be magnified in the establishment and nurturing of right personal relationships, primarily with God through Jesus Christ and in only a less degree

through any others of God's children who will for the love of their brothers bring them unto Jesus, to know whom is to know the living God.

I

THE VOLITIONAL ELEMENT IN KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF

The opening essay of this series has to do with an important feature of the problem of knowledge and belief. In its preparation the writer has found especially interesting and helpful the work of Professor James, entitled, "The Will to Believe," and the work of Professor Bowne, entitled, "The Theory of Thought and Knowledge." Mention may also be made of the essay by Wilfrid Ward, entitled, "The Wish to Believe," in which the passional element in belief is discussed. The fact that the author writes from a Roman Catholic standpoint does not in this case materially change the value of the argument. The author vindicates the "wish to believe" as a legitimate aid in the attainment of truth. The essay is well written and is in the form of three dialogues in which the chief speakers are an agnostic lawyer and a Catholic priest.

To most people the problem of knowledge is not a problem at all; they just know, and that is all there is of it. If they have studied psychology a little, they probably analyze the mind into intellect, sensibility and will. They then declare that the mind knows with the intellect, and that knowledge is the result.

When we come to the realm of belief we find the unreflecting multitude believing or disbelieving very largely as directed by self-interest, and with little care for any rules of logic. As soon as a little science is learned such unreasoned belief is very likely to be dethroned, and perhaps cast out as evil, while unreflection gives way to skepticism, and Reason (spelled with a big R), pledged to the worship of "objective evidence," and "absolute certitude," is enthroned. Clifford is quoted by James as saying: "It is wrong always, everywhere, and for everyone, to believe anything upon insufficient evidence," all of which sounds very well indeed. But it must not be forgotten that what constitutes sufficient evidence upon which to base belief is itself a question upon which not all minds agree. Clifford himself would no doubt have difficulty in producing "objective evidence" which all would regard as sufficient to warrant all his belief. Has Clifford then no right to believe that in support of which he finds evidence which he is willing to accept as sufficient? Most certainly he has such right, and further, as a condition precedent to all his belief, he not only may, but must will, upon his part and as for himself, to accept the evidence as sufficient to warrant such belief.

In this world no knowledge is complete. All human knowledge is based upon certain assumption. In any absolute sense we never can go

beyond the probable. For us no knowledge is absolute.

Absolute and universal skepticism in the sense of universal doubting and questioning is therefore possible. Upon the plane of formal logic where so-called "objective evidence" is always required, and where "absolute certitude" is the only good, the end of the argument must be thorough-going agnosticism and collapse. There is nothing that may not be questioned. We are not weakened but fortified by this recognition of our human limitations. There is nothing then beyond the reach of the Pyrrhonistic skeptic. James is right when he says, "No concrete test of what is really true has ever been agreed upon." There is no such thing as "absolute certitude" based upon "objective evidence." Knowledge is not determined thus independently of the knower. Bowne puts it this way in his chapter on "Philosophic Skepticism," "The notion of an official speculative standard apart from mind, a kind of philosophic standard metre, is absurd. The mind is necessarily its own standard and judge." Those who think that the mind has nothing to do with the determination of its own knowledge and beliefs, that the volitional character of knowledge and belief is only a fancy, and that the mind is really forced by "objective evidence" to the acknowledgment of "absolute certitude," or to the exercise of belief or disbelief, would do well to note care-

fully the following from Professor James, and they will see how uncertain a thing "absolute certitude" may be. He says: "For what a contradictory array of opinions have objective evidence and absolute certitude been claimed! The world is rational through and through,—its existence is an ultimate brute fact; there is a personal God,—a personal God is inconceivable; there is an extra-mental physical world immediately known,—the mind can only know its own ideas; a moral imperative exists,—obligation is only the resultant of desires; a permanent spiritual principle is in every one,—there are only shifting stages of mind; there is an endless chain of causes,—there is an absolute first cause; an eternal necessity,—a freedom; a purpose,—no purpose; a primal one,—a primal many; a universal continuity,—an essential discontinuity in things; an infinity,—no infinity. There is this,—there is that; there is indeed nothing which someone has not thought absolutely true, while his neighbor deemed it absolutely false."

We must recognize the volitional action of the mind in determining its own knowledge and belief. We must conclude with Bowne that "Mind is necessarily its own standard and judge," and that "every rational being must at last trust his rational insight."

We may define the will as the whole mind in its power to put forth acts of volition. There is an old notion in psychology that the mind is

divided into intellect, sensibility and will, something as if the mind had three rooms. In one room all acts of perceiving and knowing take place. Marked over the door to this room is the awe-inspiring word Intellect. In another room all the tears are shed, all the laughs are enjoyed, all acts of feeling are indulged. Over the door to this room is marked Sensibility. In a third room all volitions are put forth and all choices made. Over its door is the word Will. What is done in any one of these rooms is, according to this way of thinking, independent of what is done in any other. Such a psychology is of course purely academical, and leaves actual life out of the account. The truth seems to be that the unitary mind is involved in every act of knowing, feeling, or willing. In every volition there are elements of knowing and feeling. So in feeling there are both volitional and intellectual elements, and in knowing there are volitional and emotional elements.

We are now ready for our main proposition, viz.: In this world there can be no knowledge or belief that does not involve a volitional element, and that is not ultimately determined by the will.

Theoretically and actually there can be no absolute knowledge for a finite mind. This proposition is, we believe, without serious question among speculators. That which in practical life we do very well to call knowledge can really

claim for itself only a high degree of probability. While in practical affairs we properly enough distinguish between knowledge and belief, yet we should not forget that what men call knowledge can never claim from the reflective mind absolute certitude, but only a strong degree of faith. As there is a volitional element in belief there is also a volitional element in our knowledge. It seems to us that both Bowne and James fail in the full statement of the case just here, for, while both clearly demonstrate the volitional element in belief, both fail apparently to recognize a like volitional element in knowledge. The mind must will to assume the trustworthiness of its own perceptive and reflective processes before it can get on at all. My mind must will to assume the trustworthiness of my senses before I can make any progress towards knowledge. I may will not to trust my nature, but by so doing I deliberately shut the door to all knowledge to which I might otherwise attain. Most important and manifold assumption must be made therefore as a condition precedent to the attainment by us of any knowledge or belief. This assumption can be made only as the mind wills to make it.

All this has a very important bearing upon the work of the Christian minister who is sent to call sovereign, free, moral agents to a possible knowledge of and belief in God. It is worth much for us to know that there can be

no knowledge or belief, in any realm, until the will steps in and declares certain assumptions made. Further the mind must will to declare the case closed and pronounce a verdict for probability, or moral certainty, which we may call knowledge, but which is only another name for a high degree of probability. Our arriving at any truth at all, therefore, depends very much upon our own will to know. So likewise our arriving at any faith depends upon our own will to believe. If we will not will to know we can not be forced to know anything. The thoroughgoing agnostic is one who will not will to know anything. As with knowledge so with belief; if we will not will to believe we can not be forced to believe anything, not even that these bodies of ours have any real existence, or that we have anything to do with our own choices. The old saying, therefore, is true not only as an "old saying" but as a philosophical proposition —"No one is so blind as he who will not see." We can now also understand how it is that "a man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still."

If the proposition which we are seeking to prove is sound, viz.: that, "In this world there can be no knowledge or belief that does not involve a volitional element, and that is not ultimately determined by the will," that fact must indeed have an important bearing upon the work of the Christian minister sent to deal with free

agents who can come to a knowledge of or a belief in the truth only as each wills so to do. Bowne speaks of the "volitional and practical nature of belief" as a point "the knowledge of which is of great importance, if not absolutely necessary for our intellectual salvation." He adds upon this point: "Persons living on the plane of instinct and hearsay have no intellectual difficulty here or anywhere else; but persons entering upon the life of reflection without insight into this fact are sure to lose themselves in theoretical impotence or in practical impudence. The impotence manifests itself in a paralyzing inability to believe, owing to the fancy that theoretical demonstration must precede belief. The impudence shows itself in ruling out with an airy levity the practical principles by which men and nations live, because they admit of no formal proof. These extremes of unwisdom can be escaped only by an insight into the volitional and practical nature of belief."

It is philosophically as well as practically true that "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching" (John vii, 17, R. V.), that is, if any man is so determined to know God's will that he is willing to will to do it so far as it may be revealed to him, he shall know. Jesus here clearly recognized the volitional element in all human knowledge of God's will.

In conclusion let it be urged that, by the way

of profitable warning, the volitional element in both knowledge and belief ought to be persistently explained until all have knowledge of the fact, and especially should this be urged on behalf of those, who, for want of a knowledge of the volitional character in all knowledge and belief, have already well-nigh lost themselves "in theoretical impotence or in practical impudence."

Individuals hear what they will to hear; see what they will to see; believe what they will to believe, and know what they will to know. And it is easily made manifest that in a large degree they will to hear what they want to hear; will to see what they want to see; will to believe what they want to believe, and will to know what they want to know.

The presence of a more or less influential intellectual element in knowledge and belief is admitted. We urge that there is also a grand passional element therein, involving both emotion or desire, and volition. Therefore, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled" (Matt. v, 6).

Finally, believing thoroughly in the practical importance of the proposition which we have herein tried to elucidate, we repeat it here: In this world there can be no knowledge or belief that does not involve a volitional element, and that is not ultimately determined by the will. Whosoever will will to know and believe the

truth may. The provision has been made for the spiritual and intellectual salvation of every individual. Let it not be forgotten that the final consummation rests with the human will.

II

THE HIGHER CRITICISM

WHAT IT IS, ITS DANGERS AND ITS ADVANTAGES TO THE PREACHER.

The higher criticism is no longer to be ignored, but to be understood. Preacher and layman must inhale something of the odors, or fumes, which arise from the too often heated discussions of the questions in a study of the subject. Certainly no preacher can afford not to know what the higher criticism really is. It should neither be ignored nor denounced, but studied.

If the critics and their followers have too often been puffed up with their own knowledge and conceit, it is also true that some have lost no opportunity to denounce them as the foes of the church and of Christ. When we were studying in the school of theology, all the students one day received a pamphlet in which the higher critics and Robert G. Ingersoll were put in the same class as foes of Christianity. The author of that pamphlet is, we believe, proclaiming today more extreme views than ever before.

Doctor C. M. Cobern has spoken of Professor Charles H. H. Wright as "that thoroughly orthodox Old Testament scholar," and then quoted the following from the Professor's pen: "There

are those, alas, who look upon every deviation from the old traditional views as akin to apostasy from the faith. But they who are gifted with a firmer faith in the 'oracles of God' and are indisposed to think the 'ark' in danger because the oxen happen to stumble, will welcome all new light upon every Biblical question."

It is important that every preacher, not only for his own sake, but also for the sake of his congregation, should have at least an intelligent general understanding of the wide field of Biblical research and criticism. All preachers need not be specialists in this branch of technical inquiry, but all need to be so prepared that they may give wise and safe counsel to their people in all matters so involving the foundations of religious faith and life. With this in mind it is our purpose to consider briefly, in this essay, the nature of the higher criticism, together with some reflections touching its dangers and its advantages to the preacher.

First, what is the higher criticism? Perhaps no single sentence is enough in which to define it. But we may describe it. Doctor Cobern says: "It is not a set of theories or conclusions of any kind; it is a method." Principal Cave, of Hackney College, London, asks: "What is the critical method?" He answers his question by saying: "It is the examination of the books of the Bible by the same principles by which all literature is studied; it is logic; it is the applica-

tion to the law and the prophets of that inductive method by which discoveries innumerable have been made in all the paths of research." Professor Ladd says: "By the higher criticism is meant that study which tries to reproduce the influences and circumstances out of which the Biblical books arose, and thus exhibit them as true children of their own time." We once heard President Harper declare that the stock questions of the higher critic are the same as every thorough-going Sunday-school teacher had been asking for a long period; namely, "Who wrote this scripture which we are now studying? When? Where? Under what conditions? For what immediate purpose?" etc.

It may also be noted that there are, as we should indeed expect, several kinds of higher criticism. We may speak of the higher criticism as moderate, or immoderate; as constructive, or destructive. As to the critics themselves, they may be Christian or non-Christian; they may be real truth-seekers, or only learned quibblers.

The great need is for all Christians to become, in a real sense, moderate, constructive inquirers into Biblical knowledge and divine truth. The results of any particular application of the higher critical method in the study of the Bible will depend largely on the character of the critic. Is he Christian, or unbelieving? Is he inclined to be a builder, or a destroyer? What is his

spirit? The character of a critic's work will depend somewhat upon his scholastic attainments, but quite as much upon what he is.

The reason why there may be such marked dangers as have been often pointed out, while at the same time there may be important advantages accruing from the higher criticism, arises largely from the fact that we thus do have so many kinds of critics, and these different kinds of critics make so many different uses of the scientific method of research.

We have thus far sought to describe the nature of the higher criticism. We have learned that it is not a system of theories or conclusions, but it is a method. We have also learned that there are many kinds of critics, moderate and immoderate, constructive and destructive, Christian and non-Christian; and that the results vary as do the critics. Hence the possibilities of dangers, upon the one hand, and of advantages, upon the other, from the higher criticism. These dangers and advantages we now propose to consider as they directly affect the preacher. And, first, the dangers to the preacher from the higher criticism may be enumerated thus:

One danger is that the preacher will allow himself to be panic-stricken. Men have been stampeded by the noise of a cry which they did not so much as take pains to understand. The Word says: "Be still, and know that I am God." The man who believes in God need not be anxi-

ous for the truth. If we believed that Satan waged an equal warfare with our God, then it would do for us to be anxious for God's truth, and to worry lest it should be overthrown. But as we believe in God, we need not have any fear as to who will triumph. "Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark," and the Lord smote Uzza for an everlasting example to the fearful and faithless. Therefore, let the investigation go on until we know all that can be known about the Word of God. Let us not worry lest the truth of God should be lost. It can be lost only by one who, knowing the truth, refuses to glorify God in it; or by one who might know the truth, but who, lest some idol of ignorance should be overthrown, refuses to use the eyes which God gave him for the discovery of the truth. May we all have faith enough to ask with every faithful Sunday-school scholar, when, and by whom, and under what circumstances the Bible was written! May we have faith enough not to fear, as did Uzza, lest the ark of God should be overthrown! Only as we come to the study of the Bible with such a truth-loving, God-believing, teachable mind, can it be possible for us to learn the message which the God of all truth has in it for us. Avoid the danger before which Uzza fell.

Another danger is that the preacher will say too much about the higher criticism in his pulpit, either to defend or to denounce it. It is

a safe rule for a preacher to follow in his ordinary pulpit ministrations never to mention the name of the higher criticism, or any of its kin. It is our conviction that in most cases the mention of the name will at once close some doors against the real truth, while it will not open any others to the truth.

Still another danger is that of arrogance and conceit. "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees!" Let the preacher who favors the higher criticism take special pains to heed this warning. Above all else in this connection, do not use any terms or any argument which may unduly reflect upon the earnest or pious wisdom of the fathers.

There is more peril to the preacher arising from the higher criticism in that he may get into the habit of preaching his doubts in the pulpit. This is, perhaps, the greatest danger of all. Mere rabbis may tell what some other rabbi said that some rabbi thought; but prophets of God, preachers of the Christ of God, have a message which the people need to hear. Preach the message. Let the preacher leave his doubts in his study until they are dissolved in a larger knowledge. In the pulpit let him speak for God "as one having authority." When God calls a man to preach, He commissions him to deliver a positive message, and to speak with authority.

I come now to speak of some real advantages

to the preacher arising from the higher criticism.

And, first, it brings to the preacher's work a scientific method, which is resolutely demanded by the temper of our time. The best thought of this age is fearless, candid, rational, believing. The higher criticism brings to our use a scientific method suited to the times.

In the second place, it may do much in giving freedom from what has sometimes amounted to a superstitious reverence for a book. It may thereby make way to God. It has been charged that while Papists worship the Pope, Protestants worship a book. This was not the case when Luther boldly reconstructed the Biblical Canon, but there came to be some grounds for such a charge later on. Under the influences of the higher critical method, the Bible may now again take its sure place in our lives and preaching as a record of God's progressive revelation of himself to men, and of man's progressive discovery of God. We now learn with Moody and the greatest evangelists, as also with the greatest scholars of the Word, to think of the Bible as inspired not "because it is," but we know it is inspired because it inspires.

We may now consider, finally, some positive uses which the preacher may properly make of the higher criticism.

And, first, he may always avail himself of the facts which the scholars bring to light, always

reserving the right to draw his own conclusions from the facts.

Secondly, he may preach the facts as facts, saying nothing about the higher criticism. Facts may be delivered with the authority becoming a preacher; theories and unproved hypotheses can not. Proved facts are a part of the great fund of God's revealed truth. He should make positive use of the facts.

Thirdly, let all the facts thus used be interpreted as the Spirit gives the preacher utterance, he remembering always to apply them with a careful view to the needs of those to whom he is called to minister. Thus the churches may learn the truth truly, and be wisely nourished and safeguarded against the insidious attacks of doubt and skepticism, rather than be weakened and destroyed in faith.

Preachers may thus use the higher criticism in the discovery of their own prophetic message to the churches of to-day. In conscious honesty and manifest loyalty to the truth as it is found in the Bible, they may speak with a freshness, a power to convict and convert, yea, with the "authority" with which God's prophets have spoken in every age.

III

MEN AND THE CHURCH

No theme of more practical importance can be brought to the consideration of Christians to-day than this of men and the church. There are many signs that the church is waking to the problem presented by the fact that relatively so few men are found in the churches. The results have been tabulated, and are already becoming the basis of reform.

In the present essay I do not propose to treat the subject exhaustively, but only to raise certain questions which must be considered in any thorough study of the general theme. Such questions are the following:

1. Are men less religious than women?
2. Why are so few men in the church?
3. Are the churches really doing the work which the church of Christ was founded to do? If not, in what do they fail most?
4. Can substitutes for the church take its place (1) in its relation to the individual, (2) in its relation to society?
5. What more should the church do to win men?

I think with reference to the first question that it is generally the opinion that men are less religious than women. And yet there have been

periods of the world's development when it has seemed as though all the light and life and knowledge were for the men. Among some peoples women are regarded, even until now, as incapable of intellectual, moral or spiritual attainment. But, thanks to Christianity, it has come to pass among all the most civilized races today that women are given an equal opportunity for intellectual and spiritual development with men. It is truly significant that only under the development of Christianity has woman won such noble recognition. And this is a great credit to Christianity and its Jewish antecedents. But who can believe that room is here found for the extreme inference that God ever intended a higher attainment of moral and spiritual life for women than he did for men? Without fear of controversy, it is rather believed that any interpretation of God's message in which it is assumed that the highest moral and religious attainment is alone, or even chiefly, for women is a mistaken interpretation.

No doubt certain types of religion will appeal more strongly to women than to men. We should expect that to be true. If—which may be granted—the prevailing interpretations of Christianity in the church often have appealed more strongly to women than to men, who has a right to say that all the fault is with those outside the church? May it not be that certain very beautiful elements of the gospel of

God which appeal more readily to women than to men have been disproportionately emphasized in the prevailing interpretation of that gospel among men? Our interpretation of the spiritual life may not have been as comprehensive as that found in the New Testament. The sympathetic, soothing, meek and lowly features of the Christ have been rightly emphasized; but it is also to be remembered that Jesus was manly, virile, courageous, heroic. Reference may be made to the cleansing of the temple; the bearing of Jesus when he was rejected at Nazareth; when he was arrested in Gethsemane; when he was before Pilate; or to any of his interviews and controversies with the scribes and Pharisees. If the church is more successful in attracting women than men, it is more than possible that the church has not represented the Christ to men aright, as it should have done. Professor Coe has shown clearly that the prevailing interpretation of the spiritual life has been too largely temperamental. Paul has insisted that a spiritual exercise, whether it is praying, or eating, or whatever it may be, is truly such only as it is done as in God's presence and with reference to Him. When the church has in certain periods of her history given real emphasis to those elements of her message which for temperamental reasons appeal as strongly to the masculine as to the feminine, then has she been as successful in winning

men as she has ever been in winning women. I am convinced that just at this point the church has a real problem. It is not shown that men are any less responsive to a rightly emphasized interpretation of the Christian appeal than are women.

One of the questions which must be considered in any thorough study of the present subject is, "Why are so few men in the church?" Preachers are in the habit of looking at things from their point of view. It is for them specially important to try to learn how others view the same problems they are studying.

With this in mind I sent out letters at one time to about forty of the representative men of one Ohio town of about fifteen hundred population, asking them, among other questions: "Why are not more men of this town members of some church?" I received thoughtful, careful and manifestly candid replies to considerably over half the letters sent, besides having the opportunity for conversation with the other persons to whom letters had been sent. Some twenty-six clearly defined and distinct reasons were offered by my correspondents in answer to my question. Somewhat strange to know, if I were to classify them as doctrinal and social, the reasons would be equally divided between the two. Of the doctrinal reasons many were formal rather than substantial, and showed objection to the organized church, rather than

to Christianity. The social reasons given were as various as the temperaments and conditions of my correspondents. Some replies were from members, some from non-members. Two of the latter thought the great number of churches in our little town kept some men out of any. Four church-members thought that secret societies, clubs, etc., take the place of the church with many men. Four members and two non-members urged that the inconsistent lives of some church-members keep many men aloof from the church. Two members referred to the careless and indifferent religious training which many men have received in their childhood and youth as a reason for their present indifference to religion and the church. Three members believed that a good many fear to come within the range of the church's influence lest they be brought under conviction for sin; hence they stay away. Five non-members said that unbelief in essential Christian doctrines is a reason why a good many men hold aloof from the churches.

Nearly all distinctly avowed their respect for the church, and expressed the belief that it is doing good in the community.

As will be seen I am now only noting the special reasons which the men of one representative town on the Western Reserve gave in answer to the question now under consideration.

Among the doctrinal reasons given were disbelief in miracles, disbelief in the supernatural

birth of Jesus, and unbelief in the Bible. And among the social reasons were the existence of so many lodges, which for many men take the place of the church, and a desire to have Sunday for other things than church. Since most of these men expressly state their respect for the church and their belief that it is doing much for the community, I urge them and all others like them, to consider that if all men did as they do, there would be no churches. Among the inconsistencies of church-members which were emphasized were hypocrisy and jealousy among the members.

It is believed that the reasons given by the men of this town are representative. In view of all this, it specially behooves the members of the churches to "walk circumspectly" before all men, avoiding all hypocrisy and jealousy as wholly incompatible with truth and love as it is in Christ. "But sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord: being ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, yet with meekness and fear: having a good conscience; that, wherein ye are spoken against, they may be put to shame who revile your good manner of life in Christ."

As stated above, one of the questions which I asked of the men of my own town with reference to the churches of that place was the following: "Are the churches really doing the work which the church of Christ was founded

to do? If not, in what do they fail most?" Most of the men gave an affirmative answer, which was qualified by the statement of particulars in which the churches were thought to fail most.

Not many of my correspondents revealed any very clear understanding of just what the church of Christ was founded to do. The New Testament must naturally be our guide in such a matter. Jesus "came to seek and to save the lost" (Luke xix, 10). He said he would build His church upon a Divinely inspired faith, in Himself, confessed (Matt. xvi, 15–18).

He ordered His disciples to go and "evangelize all peoples," organizing them through baptism into the faith of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The newly-enlisted were to be taught "all things which Jesus commanded" (Matt. xxviii, 18–20).

Finally, the work of the church was held by Jesus to be the same as His own—"As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (John xx, 21).

In so far as the churches are measuring up to that ideal they are doing what the church of Christ was founded to do. In all this it is well to remember that the churches are only the aggregation of the individuals who form them.

My correspondents named the following particulars in which the churches were believed to fail most: (1) Too little difference between

members and non-members; (2) In some revivalistic preaching and some discourteous methods; (3) Too little of "the personal touch," as from members to the outsiders; (4) Too little harmony or agreement among the churches; (5) Lack of "charity" (giving) was charged by one non-member; (6) "Lack of faith in God to launch out upon great things" and "too much dependence in man—ministers in particular"; (7) Churches were failing to convict individuals of sin as they ought, and to convince them of their need of a Saviour. This was urged by two members; (8) One of the local pastors believes the churches are especially failing to arouse men to a sense of the sacredness of life, with its infinite significance; (9) It was also urged that the churches are failing to give the pastors "the earnest and prayerful support they need to make their work the greatest success."

Nothing is more needful than that all Christians should acquaint themselves with Jesus and his teaching, that they may know what the true mission of the church of Christ really is. They should also study the particulars in which the churches fail most, that these may be corrected, and that the Bride of Christ may adorn herself for his coming.

Another question which is being asked in widely varied circles to-day may be briefly considered in this place. Can substitutes for the the church take its place: (1) In its relation

to the individual, (2) In its relation to society?

Doubtless there are many practical substitutes for the churches. Men and women have only a limited amount of energy; and when it is spent in one direction, it cannot be used in another. There are clubs, societies and lodges, open and secret, for men and for women, almost without number. And doubtless it is true that these often interfere with the legitimate claims of the church of Christ. The church has been derelict in her meeting of the needs of men in times past, and hence lodges and orders have arisen to do for men what the church, if her leaders in their day could have been wise enough, might have done and should have done. I am quite in harmony with a correspondent who writes: "The idea that secret societies and lodges have been the cause of keeping men from church is, in my opinion, erroneous. These lodges have been the natural outcome and result of these religiously dissatisfied men, and not the cause." My correspondent is right at least as regards the primary accounting for lodges and orders. Of course, these societies, which arose as a result of the church's failure to measure up to her full opportunity, may now in turn become a real cause why more men do not become members of some church. And, considering the more exhaustless possibilities of the church, the needs of universal human life, the

lodges, if men are not careful, may easily come to occupy a position wherein the good shall crowd out or hinder the best. This we must believe is often the case.

But the press, the school, legislation, the club, the lodge, ethical culture, can no one, nor can all, become a substitute for the church in its relation to the individual or to society. Though the organized church has never reached its ideal, it is yet significant that it was founded to advance the most universal scheme of human brotherhood ever conceived for men. All others fall short of it, as all other organizers fall short of Christ. The individual cannot achieve his best until led to seek his own interests in the interests of the rest of humanity. None but Christ's church can lead him to this universal world-view.

The same reasoning applies to society. Of possible substitutes for the church Archbishop Ireland says: "Such things have their place and their value, but they do not suffice. Such things do not control the inner souls of men where virtue or vice is born, whence issue the edicts which govern man's outer life in respect to himself and his fellowmen. This nothing but religion can do." The highest organized representative of religion in the earth is, under various forms, the church of Christ. As comprehensive as the needs of strong men are its powers

to satisfy. Other forces and organizations may be wholesome and good, but no substitutes can for long take the place of the church.

Finally, what more should the church do to win men than it is now doing? Touching this question it is my conviction that the signs of the times are full of hope. The church is already waking to the larger call. She is very generally beginning to do that which she must continue to do if she would win men. The preaching of the church must be virile. It must not emphasize less the tender, sympathetic and gentle, but it must emphasize more the masculine and the strong in the message. Let our ministers, who have too often disproportionately emphasized those elements in the Christ message which appeal most naturally to women, henceforth study to so interpret the Christ message as to emphasize those elements which appeal most naturally to the masculine, to men. Preach the strong, brave, fearless, manly Christ. Call men to a service of courage, work, action. Promote and encourage the work in the church for boys and men. Emphasize the men's club as much as the ladies' aid society. Let the church not show too much surprise when the men come, but make a place for men as men. Let men be welcomed in the church as warmly as they are welcomed in the lodge. In the application of the comprehensive gospel to human problems let

real attention be given to those problems which are distinctly men's problems. The gospel of God in Christ is a gospel for mankind. Let the church rightly interpret that message, and men will be glad to be won by the appeal.

IV

THE THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION DEMANDED BY THE TIMES

The subject of theological training is one of perennial interest to the whole Christian church. In the present essay are presented, (1) Some preconsiderations tending to invest the subject with special timeliness; (2) A representation of the present state of theological education; and (3) A suggested scheme of theological education in harmony with what is conceived to be the demand of the times.

I. Preconsiderations. The age in which we live has witnessed in an eminent degree a widening of the bounds of human knowledge. Since the dawn of the modern era, we have come to believe that the capacity of the human mind for conquest is well nigh unlimited. This faith has been strengthened by the advance made during recent years in the arts and sciences. Illustration is unnecessary.

At the same time, in the realm of fundamental conceptions, speculative thought passed from crass materialism to evolutionism, and then rejected even that as not being adequate to the explanation of the world, though it may be a worthy doctrine of process within the realm of scientific observation. Better than ever it is

coming to be understood that there is no explanation of the world except the living God; and Theism, therefore, is regaining ground with the philosophers.

All this prepares a scholarly, rational basis for the great central truth of the Christian's Bible, namely, the doctrine of God, and bodes well for all true theology. Speaking of theology as "the science of God," who is "the beginning, the middle, and the end of all things," President Hartranft well declares that it is "the starting point and goal of all genuine knowledge as a whole, and of all classified knowledges."

Turning now to the church, whose mission includes the popularization of the truth respecting God and theology, as thus conceived, it can not be said to have been altogether successful in this work. Too many persons in our so-called Christian country either wholly ignore the church, or shirk all responsibility in regard to it. Careful investigation in hundreds of towns and several different states shows, according to Josiah Strong, "that somewhat less than one-half the people profess to attend church" ("New Era," p. 294).

Such conditions present a problem which for the most part must be solved by the coming ministry. When the ministry can adapt the gospel to the varied needs of a varied modern people, there will not be so much cause for lamentation over the separation of the masses and

the church. Of course, without the help of the church and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, any ministry can do little; but "Like priest, like people" contains truth. All this invests the subject of theological education with burning interest.

Further, the minister's relative position in society has greatly changed during recent decades. He is no longer expected to be the only educated man in his community. This indicates a great change since the time when more than half of all college graduates entered the ministry. College graduates now enter all walks in life, and the minister must be prepared to face them in the pew. Of Harvard graduates, during 1642 to 1650, fifty-three and three tenths per cent. entered the ministry, while during 1861 to 1870, six and seven-tenths per cent. entered the ministry. During 1702 to 1710, of Yale graduates, seventy-five and seven-tenths per cent. entered the ministry, while during 1861 to 1870, fifteen per cent. did so.

The Wesleyan University, somewhat remarkable to know, forms the single exception, showing, as it does, an increased per cent. of its graduates entering the ministry.[1]

[1] "College Graduates in the Ministry," by C. F. Thwing, *International Review,* August, 1881:—This article is brief, thoughtful, comprehensive. It is valuable for its tables exhibiting the number of graduates, the number entering the ministry, and the percentage of such to all others, in Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Brown, Columbia, Amherst,

Again, the minister's competition has increased. The telegraph and the press report the world's happenings at the morrow's breakfast-table. The successful minister must adapt himself to these new conditions. He can no longer be an educated giant among pigmies; but the times demand for him an education which shall make him a respected leader among men. "Every church should be able to say to each sneering disciple of unchristian culture: 'My pastor is every way your peer'" (*Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vol. 36, p. 187).

And finally, we note that with the changes mentioned, as regards the minister's relative position in society, and with the minister's in-

Oberlin and Wesleyan University, calculated for each decade since the founding of these institutions down to 1870. The following are indicative:—

	Years.	Graduates.	Entered the Ministry.	Per Cent.
Harvard	1642–1650	45	26	53.3
	1861–1870	997	67	6.7
Yale	1702–1710	33	25	75.7
	1861–1870	1012	152	15
Princeton	1748–1760	161	80	50
	1861–1870	622	132	21.2
Brown	1769–1780	60	21	35
	1861–1870	383	86	22.4
Oberlin	1837–1840	56	37	66
	1861–1870	201	64	31.3
Wesleyan University	1833–1840	142	55	38.7
	1841–1850	363	102	28.1
	1851–1860	276	131	47.4
	1861–1870	263	123	46.8

creased and increasing competition, there are also greater demands made upon him than ever before. These are present-day demands, and to satisfy them the minister must have received a present-day education. In this relation president Eliot remarks: "There is no social problem to-day, however difficult, upon which the minister is not expected to have his mind made up, and to be ready for action. Yet the evils to which these problems relate are extraordinarily complicated in their origin and development; and the remedies for them are notoriously difficult to devise and apply, slow-working and hard to follow out in practical operation. Sentiment is a very unsafe guide in these matters; and the coolest philosopher, acquainted with political economy, medicine and the history of legislation on behalf of public morality, will be often at fault. All these difficulties which beset the minister of to-day are of recent origin; in this country they hardly antedate the present century."

With these preconsiderations before us, we take up:

II. A Representation of the Present State of Theological Education. In the following we give only the results of our investigation without discussion. For completeness of view we mention the Roman Catholic and Protestant State Church systems of ministerial education, and refer the curious to an article in the *Metho-*

dist Quarterly Review for January, 1872, by Warren, entitled, "Two Systems of Ministerial Education;" and to an article in the *Contemporary Review* for April, 1879, by Littledale, bearing the title, "The Professional Studies of the English Clergy."

Little more than bare mention can be made of the Methodist system of Conference study, which was styled by Kidder as "A system of ministerial training or education *in* the ministry *for* the ministry." Probably no part of the Methodist economy has been more useful in giving to Methodism unity and force for leadership than has its educational system. It is significant that the Congregational churches have recently adopted a plan involving the main features of the Methodist system of Conference study, as can be seen from "The Education for the Ministry," by Gillett, published by the Hartford Seminary Press.

Confining ourselves now to a study of the Protestant churches of the United States, it is not too much to say that earnest thought is being given to discover what is the theological education demanded by the times; and great efforts are being made to provide just that education which will satisfy those demands. The problem is not an easy one, and its solution can be only relatively successful in any case.

We have carefully examined the catalogues of the following theological schools, namely, Boston,

Drew, and Garrett (Methodist Episcopal); Princeton (Presbyterian); Rochester and Southern Baptist (Baptist); General Theological, New York, and Episcopal Theological, Cambridge, Massachusetts (Episcopal); Oberlin, Bangor and Hartford (Congregational); Tufts (Universalist); Meadville (Unitarian); and Harvard (undenominational). We have tabulated the results under the following heads: (1) To whom open; (2) Kind of course; (3) Length of course; (4) Graduation.

(1) With two exceptions (Meadville and Tufts) applicants for admission must be professing Christians, and in most cases they must be members of some church. One school (General Theological Seminary, Episcopal) is open only to communicants of the Episcopal Church. Most of the schools are open only to candidates for the ministry, or to those preparing for some special form of Christian work. To admit others is exceptional. As to the admission of women, many of the catalogues are silent, though it is known that women are admitted to many of the schools on equal terms with men. Probably all the schools sometimes admit "special students," and likewise "graduate students."

Individual schools make other minor conditions of admission, which we need not here detail.

(2) The various curriculums may be classified as follows: (a) In twelve schools the course is partly prescribed and partly elective; (b) In

two schools (Harvard and Southern Baptist) the elective principle dominates. The trend is toward more electives. Ten years ago more than half of these schools offered only a prescribed course for candidates for graduation. More and more is afforded the opportunity for the individual to perfect the peculiar gift which God gave him. The schools are alive to the demands of the age, as is seen by the new courses constantly added, such as religions, and religion in general, sociological studies, including missions, ethics, polity, administration, etc.

(3) In every case the regular course contemplates at least a three-years' period of study.

(4) Most of the schools studied confer a theological degree upon those who complete the regular course, provided that they have before received the college degree of A.B., or its equivalent.

There may now be offered for further consideration and conclusion of the whole matter:

III. A Suggested Scheme of Theological Education in harmony with what is conceived to be the demand of the times.

First, we are convinced that the best place to study theology is in a theological seminary which is in friendly alliance with a university. This university alliance is most important. Work elected in other departments by students in the seminary should be credited to the seminary degree, and vice versa.

Second, beneficiary funds should be carefully guarded and wisely bestowed. Young persons should not be bribed to enter the ministry, any more than they should be bribed to enter the professions. This cannot be too strongly insisted upon. And no conditions calculated in any way to hinder the free display of intellectual honesty in the future should be attached to any beneficiary endowments. We think this applies to the condition on which Methodist students in one of our best Methodist theological institutions are given "free" scholarships. We refer to the promise which Methodist students who receive such scholarships are required to make, not to enter the ministry of any other denomination "before, or within five years after," severing connection with the school, on pain of forfeiting $100, with interest, for each year of attendance at the school. We note also a semblance of constraint in this matter, since it is not known by prospective students that such a promise is required until after they are allowed to get on the grounds, without being advised by catalogue or otherwise that the acceptance of the "free" tuition, etc., will in any sense require a signing away of their moral freedom for the future. Even if such notice were inserted in the catalogue, yet the bestowment of beneficiary funds upon such conditions would be most impolitic, and far from complimentary to the great church under whose auspices this school has been endowed. These

fearless times in which we live demand that the gospel minister shall not be subsidized; and certainly the Methodist Church wants no one in her ministry who may, under any possible construction, be held there on pain of forfeiting $300, or any part thereof, should he leave it for the ministry of some other denomination.

Third, the course of study should be wholly elective. The studies offered for election should be determined with a view to their practical bearing, directly or indirectly, on the work of the ministry, by the same authorities who at present determine the scope and character of the required studies.

Hebrew is already elective in some schools, and such opens the way to better results on the part of those who elect the study of Hebrew, since they are no longer hindered by those who have no talent for the study. To those who object that a knowledge of Hebrew is necessary to an understanding of the Jewish Scriptures, we reply that Old Testament theology can be nearly as effectively studied in English, and all the characteristic advantages of the historical method may be secured without a knowledge of the Hebrew. Most ministers must take their Hebrew on authority anyhow, and it is a pity to compel every one to put in so much time only to secure such a smattering of Hebrew as will be of no practical use in the future.

Theology is the science of God in all His

manifold manifestation. No one can master it all. The times demand that power shall be generated in the theological school, not that a smattering of many things shall be taught.

Fourth, opportunities for theological education should be provided for laymen. In administration laymen have been put forward. Why should they be excluded from theological training? We agree with Briggs, that "theological education should be free, open to any man or woman who has sufficient elementary training to pursue these studies."

We believe also that persons of good moral character, though non-Christian, should be admitted to study in the theological schools. It was Jesus who said: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." In these times the spirit of inquiry has become relentlessly candid and fearless. The age no longer seeks for proof of foredrawn conclusions, but rather for the truth itself in the open field, regardless of consequences. Why should one who is earnest and who desires to study in a theological school be obliged to draw his main conclusion before entering upon his investigation? This age demands a theological education which is candid, fearless, honest, and open to all earnest men and women.

We should not only grant, but insist, that the doors of the Christian ministry ought never to be opened to any but to the called of God.

But the multitude of educated men and women who are now—largely because of the one-sided character of their education—indifferent to the church, should be given equal privileges with all others in the study of the great themes lying within the sphere of theological inquiry.

Fifth, the theological degree should follow the completion of a three-years' course of approved elective study, but it should be conferred only upon those already having the collegiate degree of A.B., or its equivalent.

Sixth, there should be opportunity for and recognition of post-graduate study.

Seventh, those whose preparation or time precludes the taking of a three-years' course, should be allowed to elect such studies for a shorter period as their time and preparation will permit. All "short course" students, as far as practicable, should be thrown with those taking the same studies even though in another course.

Finally, the church itself—and this applies to any denomination—should forever continue to pronounce upon each candidate as to eligibility to orders. No one ought to be given the authority of a Christian church to conduct the offices of the ministry whom God has not called to that ministry. "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron" (Heb. v, 4). The church is bound to hold and exercise the right, so far as its authority and sanction may extend, to pronounce upon the

evidence of genuineness of the alleged divine call. The candidate's personal religious creed and experience, besides his knowledge of and sympathy with the history, traditions and polity of the particular denomination, should be examined into by the church, such being among the elements determining his fitness or unfitness for the work of the ministry in that church. In a course of theological studies open for election, provision should be made for those especially who wish to study the history, polity, etc., of the denomination to which the school is indebted for its existence. The proposition insisted upon is this, that the conditions of admission to the Christian ministry, and the conditions of admission to a theological school, ought not to be the same. The church and the schools have largely erred in the past at this point. The theological schools ought not to be considered special guardians of denominational orthodoxy, and they can serve the church and humanity as well, and better, when all parties cease to expect them to be such. The doors of the theological school should be wide open; the doors of the Christian ministry should be well guarded.

V

THE OPPORTUNITIES OF THE MINISTRY AS A LIFE WORK

It is probably true that "No man is born into the world whose work is not born with him," but it is also true that for the proper life-work of every man there is opportunity ready-made, or which can be made, for its accomplishment.

In the consideration of any suggested life-work for the doing of which there is little or no opportunity, ready-made or which can be made, one may put it down as sure that such is not one's work. When considering the question of a life-work, when trying to find out what God wants one to do as one's part in the world's work, as one's part with Him in the redeeming and perfecting of the race, it is perfectly proper to ask concerning the opportunities of any suggested field for labor. Opportunity plus need is the voice of God's order, and where opportunity is not, and can not be made, God does not command anyone there to work. Therefore it is proper that one should consider the opportunities of the ministry as a life-work.

And be it noted first of all that every age has had its apostles of complaint and despair, and our age affords no exception. We have our apostles of hopeless atheism, such as Schopen-

hauer, whose highest message is pessimism and despair.

Conditions could not be much worse than those anticipated by Paul in the first century. "For men," said he, "shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. . . ." (2 Tim. iii, 2–5.) Even in our own day Dwight L. Moody said in the *Independent* of October 5th, 1893, that "there is every indication that the present dispensation will end in a great smash-up." All such pessimism is based on the assumption that the world is now waxing "worse and worse," that Protestantism is a failure, that Christianity is breaking down, and that the church as organized in the world is losing ground, that the ministry has lost its power and influence among men. A writer in the *Atlantic Monthly* said not very long ago: "The disintegration of religion has proceeded rapidly. . . . The church is now, for the most part, a depository of social rather than religious influences. Its chief force is no longer religious." There are indeed those who look back to the past for the golden age of the church, and these are they who always

talk of the "good old days" of the church's history. It may have been to one of these who believed that the golden age of the church was past and that the door of opportunity was closing to the Christian ministry and that the age of conquest was finished, to whom Whittier wrote:

"Idly as thou, in that old day
Thou mournest, did thy sire repine;
So in his time, thy child grown gray
Shall sigh for thine.
But life shall on and upward go;
The eternal step of progress beats
To that grand anthem, calm and slow,
Which God repeats.
. . . . . .
Wake then and watch! The world is gray
With morning light."

In approaching the question of the ministry, and especially the opportunities of the ministry, as a life work, the proposition may be offered that there has never been a time when there was so much Christian faith among men as there is to-day; that Christianity is distinctly a growing factor in the world's thought and life; that the conception of the sphere and activities of the church and of the ministry was never so wide as it is to-day; that the average Christian minister never stood more firmly and squarely upon the earth where men live, nor ever reached

more nearly up to heaven into the immediate presence of God's throne than he does to-day.

In the second place we must freely recognize that the minister's relative position in society has greatly changed during the recent decades. For a discussion of this changed relative position of the minister in society the reader is referred to the preceding essay on the "Theological Education Demanded by the Times." We must freely admit important changes to have taken place in recent years in the relative position of the minister in society and also in the notable increase in the competition which the minister has to meet in the prosecution of his work.

Other changes, which have an important bearing upon our inquiry, have also taken place in the prevailing notion of the ministry itself. But before considering these changes and their bearing upon the opportunities of the ministry our attention should be called to the fact that opportunity is a notion largely relative to the individual who is to consider it. What to one person would seem to constitute splendid opportunity would seem to another person to afford no opportunity worth considering. In the weighing of any suggested opportunity not more depends upon objective conditions, involving as they do the field of possible action, than depends upon the one considering the question. And especially in estimating the opportunities of any field for a life-work as much will depend

in the equation upon the subjective as upon the objective factors. The way in which any young man will view the opportunities of the ministry will ultimately be determined by what the young man himself is. The subjective factor will weigh more here than the objective to determine a young man's final view. How any young man shall view the opportunities of the ministry today will chiefly be determined, first, by that man's mental and moral attitude, by his estimate of life's primary and general mission and, secondly, by his personal gifts, natural and acquired.

If our thinking has been valid thus far we may now freely acknowledge that times have greatly changed and that these changes have been such as to affect greatly the character of the ministry as a profession, and also to modify greatly the opportunities which the ministry offers to young men about to enter upon a life-work.

But we shall have to insist in the third place that these changes which have taken place in business, which have revolutionized educational ideals and methods, which have democratized social ideals, which have discovered to mankind the worlds of science, and which have so completely mellowed, moralized and vitalized philosophy and theology—we shall have to insist that these changes have been such in practically every field as to widen and make more important the opportunities of the Christian ministry as a life-

work for one who desires nothing so much as to be of service to humanity, to be free to think and speak and act, and to grow in wisdom and true goodness.

It is the author's conviction that the rational warrant for religion was never so widely recognized as it is to-day.

One important mission of the Christian minister of to-day is the popularization of the truth respecting God and theology, as thus conceived.

If one desires financial riches above all else, the ministry is not for him. The salary of the average Christian minister is not equal to that of an average skilled mechanic. If the objects of life are to be wealth, or fame, political power, glory, ease or self-indulgence, then the opportunities of the ministry will not be worth considering. If, on the other hand, the attainment of the higher satisfactions is to be the object of life; if one desires to be of service, to be free in the freedom of truth wherewith Christ makes free, and continually to grow, then the opportunities of the ministry are at least equal to those of any other calling, and in definite particulars are such as to demand careful thought from every Christian and especially from every educated young man.

Does a young man really want to live a life of service? How can he more directly serve this age than by a manifestation, in the face of commercialism, of real hungering, not after money,

but after righteousness and the rule of God in the business of men? There is certainly need to-day for men who are willing to serve their age like that.

Religion is the most universal interest in life. And the Christian minister is set to be a prophet of religion. It is the minister's opportunity to listen to the voices of the spirit and then to prophesy to men. Two and three times or more every week the minister has an opportunity of speaking out of his inmost thinking to at least a few of the most earnest minded people in the community, the deepest message God has been able to give him. Many who ought to be prophets are too hard of hearing and unwilling themselves, and God can not send them, but there are abundant opportunities to prophesy for those who are equipped and willing to be sent.

Can you and I doubt that there are really splendid opportunities to-day for those who are qualified to teach the ideas of Jesus? Men were never more weary with the world than now and they desire someone who can tell them about true rest. Men were never more hungry than now for some word from the unseen. If true prophets will not go, then the people will listen to the false prophets.

In every age the true regenerators of society have been the prophets of God. They have followed inspirations which were breathed upon them from the unseen world. They have builded

better than they knew because they have been true in the delivery of a message the full meaning of whose contents they did not know. They have slowly, surely, transformed the lives, the thoughts, the ideals, the loves, the hates of men. Christian ministers have told the beauties of divine fatherhood and human brotherhood and human slavery has become hateful in the sight of men. They must proclaim the horrors and selfishness of the liquor traffic, its waste and wickedness, its greed and cruelty, until men will wonder after awhile that the civilized world could have ever tolerated such an unmitigated curse.

The Christian minister must continue to prophesy the wrath of God against lust and social impurity until men everywhere shall revolt from such supreme selfishness and shall come to hate such treason and disloyalty against their fellow members in the family of God, and shall effectually resolve no longer to desecrate these bodies, which God has intended to be fit temples of truth, with such vileness.

In an age of commercialism the preacher must exalt the true riches; against greed he must warn and protect the poor. He must everywhere warn and counsel and summon men to seek first the things that have eternal significance.

Upon the surface of things there have been indeed great changes but the fundamental needs of humanity are now about what they were in the day of Plato and Socrates and Paul.

The Kingdom of God never comes with observation. The real coming of social reform is not with blare of trumpets. There are great opportunities for all men, who want a part with Jesus in the renewing and redeeming of men, in the work of the ministry. In the purifying of society the minister works from within. The biggest opportunities are unknown to large numbers of the people and most important results are unheralded. Quietly, steadily, the work goes on. The work of the Christian ministry is done without observation. A prize fight is heralded. The man who steals a million dollars is famous, even if not infamous. But the man who turns a sinner from the error of his way or who plans for the salvation of a race surely and wisely may die unknown. But the work goes on. As never before the world is open to the coming of the well-trained and thoroughly consecrated Christian ministry, and the rewards are according to the work, and every man shall have his reward.

VI

A STUDY OF DOCTRINES

Any candid discussion of doctrines to-day ought to prove clarifier and corrective of the views of many Christians without seeming uninteresting or provincial to the general reader. It is believed that no greater lack is seen to-day in both the general and special study of doctrines than in the all too prevalent want of perspective. Modern men are learning to regard truth everywhere with a view to right perspective, and as a result scientific, political, social and religious doctrines are coming to be better understood as to their real worth, as to their inherent limitations and possible dangers when over-magnified, and as to their practical importance when viewed as the formulated results of past thinking. It is to be hoped that both our general and special study of doctrines will more and more free us from any provincializing and blighting bondage to the thinking of the past generations, while at the same time fortifying us against the opposite error of ignoring these formulated results of past thinking. We must learn that doctrines are made for man and not man for doctrines. Doctrines are to be our servants, not our masters. The present study is an essay, therefore, toward the wider realization of the true nature of and

really practical importance of doctrines as setting forth the formulated results of the thinking of the past for our instruction and counsel.

Contrary to a somewhat prevalent opinion, most of the Christian denominations had their origin in a revival rather than in the preaching of some new doctrine or doctrines. For example, Methodism has not nor did it ever have any doctrines which may not also be Congregationalist or Episcopalian. The Wesleys and their followers have recognized the importance of organization and the significance of doctrinal statements. But when the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized it was given "Articles of Religion" which were condensed for the purpose from the Articles of the Church of England. And to-day the Methodist Episcopal Church has no official statement of doctrines except this, which was borrowed ready-made from the Church of England, and then cut down for the use of the new church in America. The founders of the movement well understood that they were not called to bring any new doctrines but rather to vitalize those which already were; the objective was life, not doctrine.

Particular attention is called to the point just mentioned, for it is here that many have erred. Danger lies in either one of two directions. Some, forgetting this, have so emphasized the importance of certain doctrines as almost to make void the grace of God. Others have so depre-

ciated all doctrines as almost to deprive any who would follow them of all the benefits of the world's past thinking. The great Christian doctrines are the formulated conclusions of generations of honest minds who have thought upon great themes.

That the church has accomplished far less for good than it might have accomplished, and far less than its sincere followers have wished that it should accomplish during the centuries, has been without doubt largely owing to a failure to present the good news that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself" with true perspective. Many a time in emphasizing some formulated statement of opinion respecting some speculative or even metaphysical problem which lay far from the realm of common life and duty, zealous Christians have fought one another, tearing "the body of Christ, which is the church," and hiding, instead of revealing, the grace of God to the world. One manifest purpose of God in Christ was to reveal Himself to His children as full of love and grace. But it is an historic fact that many times by an exaggerated stress placed upon doctrines this very love and grace of the Father has been made of none effect.

We present, therefore, as the first proposition requisite to a proper study of doctrines the following, negative in form but positive in teaching:

> No doctrine should ever be so emphasized as to raise in any mind the idea that it is ever to be believed as itself the object of our faith. We must not permit our emphasis upon or the acceptance of any doctrine to condition or make void the grace of God revealed in Jesus Christ.

The history of the church through the centuries furnishes a sad commentary upon the all too general mistake of over-emphasizing and of unduly exalting doctrines. And yet the opposite extreme is also to be avoided. There have been, and are, those who have been so indifferent to doctrines that they would pass without consideration the creeds and dogmas which represent the best thinking of the best minds in all ages of the church. So to ignore the past is, when rightly understood, to stand for the baldest egotism. No one but an egotistic individualist would deny, if he rightly understood himself, the importance of clear thought and definite and comprehensive statement, or the value to all humble seekers for the truth of the great doctrines thought out and profoundly stated by the fathers.

I present, therefore, as the second proposition requisite to a proper understanding of the subject under discussion, the following, which lies over against the first:

> No doctrine should be so depreciated as to lead any mind so to ignore it as to be deprived thereby of the strength-giving, safeguarding and fortifying benefits which come to everyone from the thinking of the past.

It should be remembered that no man lives to himself alone, and no man thinks to himself alone. Everyone owes it to himself, and to the family of God on earth, that he should place himself firmly and intelligently on the definite and formulated results of past inquiry, if so be he may climb therefrom to the nobler heights beyond.

Being upon our guard, then, against the danger either of over-emphasizing doctrines, upon the one hand, or of unduly depreciating them, upon the other, we come now to the very important question: What doctrines, if any, need to be emphasized to-day? If we have reasoned correctly thus far, the question which we now consider is very largely one of perspective. We have already said that the church has accomplished far less for good than it might have accomplished, and far less than its sincere followers have wished that it should accomplish during the centuries, without doubt largely because of failure to present the good news that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself," with due regard to perspective. And, as noted

by Samuel G. Green, "The perspective of truth continually changes." This matter of present-day perspective should determine for us what doctrines in any period most need to be emphasized.

It should be here noted that no sure standard can be laid down for different minds or for different periods. Green's words are again relevant. Speaking of beliefs which underlie doctrines, he says: "Such beliefs will be held with the very varying strength of conviction and sense of their relative value to the religious life. Certain of these beliefs will appear of more importance than others; and this comparative estimate, again, will vary in different minds."

Having regard, therefore, to this matter of perspective, I present as my third and positive proposition the following:

> Those doctrines most need to be emphasized to-day which stand most closely related to the great subject of the gospel, the restoration of prodigals to the Father; which are, in other words, in nearest identity to our God-given "ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Cor. v, 18, 19).

Finally, having regard to this matter of perspective, and believing that so are correctly in-

terpreted the needs of our age, I am, therefore, convinced that of the many great and true doctrines, none of which should be depreciated, and all of which should be preached, and above all should they be explained line upon line and precept upon precept, there are, however, three which need specially to be emphasized to-day.

Since it holds nearest identity to our God-given "ministry of reconciliation," I would first of all emphasize the great Christian doctrine of Christ, as the divine Son of God, in whom and by whom has been revealed the gracious and loving purpose of God the Father "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." With the Apostle I would declare before all: "If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new. But all things are of God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation. We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us: We beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor. v, 17–20). I would declare the unwillingness of God and Christ that any should perish, "That in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ" (1 Peter iv, 11).

In the second place, I would emphasize the doctrine of faith. The writer in the letter to the Hebrews, xi, 1, has given a definition of faith. By the aid of a parenthetical suggestion found in Thayer's Lexicon, page 202, under the word *elegkos* one may easily derive this translation of that verse: "Now faith is firm trust in things hoped for, the inwrought conviction resulting from the proving of things in the realm of the unseen." Faith may undoubtedly run beyond reason but it can not run at all without reason. The faith which the philosophical writer of the letter to the Hebrews had in mind was something more than mere credulity. In his mind faith was something based upon the most rational proof. Now a man's faith is the measure of his power to receive. Faith is the universal and all-essential condition upon which whosoever will may avail himself of the gracious benefits of God in Jesus Christ, and without which no one can be helped by any of those benefits. "For by grace are ye saved through faith" (Eph. ii, 8). "For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth. . . . For therein is revealed a righteousness of God from faith unto faith: as it is written, but the righteous shall live by faith" (Rom. i, 16, 17).

And in the third place, I would specially emphasize the doctrine of assurance. People are everywhere longing for the sense of filial rela-

tionship with the Father such as will make them feel at all times at home in their Father's world. They need to be instructed how they may know that they are "in Christ." More than a repeating of the words of the eighth chapter of the letter to the Romans is necessary; the words must be explained. I thoroughly believe in the desire of God the Father that every soul should enjoy a conscious filial relationship with Him. I further believe that it is the privilege of all properly instructed souls thus consciously to know the Father. Christ needs witnesses to the efficacy of divine grace through faith to bring life and peace and reconciliation with the Father. This doctrine of assurance, or the witness of the spirit, needs to be taught and explained and emphasized to-day to the end that more Christians shall know whom they have believed, that so they may stand as sure, steady and unfailing witnesses before a wide world of theoretical agnosticism, and that which is too often actual confusion, if not practical atheism.

VII

A GROUP OF STUDIES OF THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JESUS

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS.

The reader is asked to consider four reasons why all persons should at this time give earnest study to the life and times of Jesus, namely, to understand the spirit of our own age; in order to know the man, the human Jesus; in order thereby to know that which could not otherwise be known about God; in order by virtue of that knowledge to have eternal life.

First, it is confidently asserted that without a knowledge of the man, the human Jesus, one can not understand that which is deeply characteristic of the spirit of our age. Ours is a Christ-ward age. It is marked by a profound interest in everything pertaining to the earthly life of Jesus who was called Christ. We have seen a list of more than five hundred biographies of Jesus. Books are written and published to satisfy a demand. And the people of to-day are eager for anything that will make Jesus better known.

A great host of young people are to-day pledged for "Christ and the Church," and in that motto "Christ" always goes before the "Church." The eyes of the toilers are turned

toward Jesus to-day as never before,—except, perhaps, when, 'tis said, the "common people heard him gladly" in Galilee. Certainly all parents, students in our schools, and all others, who wish in the best sense to be abreast of the time, must not know more of Alexander or Cæsar than they do of him whose life and teaching have made our twentieth century civilization, and especially its spirit, possible.

A second reason for the present study is that so we may know the human teacher and leader of men, the man, Jesus, whose relations with the people of his time were most interesting, and who was universally acknowledged to be a very remarkable person. There have been those who have sought to exalt Christian ideas independently of their historic setting. But Christian ideas can not be known without a knowledge of Jesus. One of the six principles on which F. W. Robertson based his teaching was "that belief in the human character of Christ's humanity must be antecedent to belief in his divine origin."

We should then, in the third place, study the life and times of the Man of Galilee in order to know that which could not otherwise be known about God. "If ye knew me, ye would know my Father also." Jesus said to Philip, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." But the world does not yet know Jesus as it ought to know him, and therefore God is not yet known as He ought to be known. From the

broken cisterns of the world's best thinking, men are turning unto Jesus that they may find the springs of living water in the mountains of God. Year by year Jesus is proving to have been the most adequate revelation of God that the world has seen, full of grace and truth.

To know Jesus is to know the best that mortals can know of God. Then should men study to know Jesus in all his works and ways, for this is to be forever alive unto the highest and the best, that is, alive unto God, that is, to know God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent; and this is eternal life (John xvii, 3). It omens well for the future of the ethical life of the race when men give themselves to a thorough study of the life and times of Jesus.

THE NATION AND THE TIMES OF JESUS.

To understand thoroughly the life and personality of any historical character it is necessary to study the age in which the person lived. What were the social, political and religious stimuli that pushed him on and made the manner of his life what it was? In such facts will be found the key to the interpretation of much in any life that would otherwise be unexplained and unexplainable. So may we be greatly aided in the discovery of the true significance of the life to be studied. This is not less true of the study of Jesus than it is of Paul or Luther or Wesley. It is true, no doubt in

a sense, that God is not coerced in His working by the ordinary course of human society, and yet it is also true that the career of Jesus among men during his "humiliation" was practically determined by the nation and the times in which he lived.

A student of the life of Jesus should know the nation and the times (1) politically, (2) socially, (3) religiously. He should have in mind the story of the nation from the beginning of exile to the national downfall. He should have in mind the end of the Northern Kingdom in B.C. 722; the carrying of the Southern Kingdom into Babylonian exile B.C. 588; the overthrow of the Babylonian Kingdom by Persia B.C. 538; the return of the Jews by permission of Cyrus B.C. 536; the origin of the Book of Malachi about B.C. 442–432; the subjugation by Alexander B.C. 332; the death of Alexander B.C. 323; the attachment of Judea and Samaria to Egypt B.C. 301; the passing of Judea and Samaria to the throne of Syria, upon which sat Antiochus, the great, B.C. 198; the desecration of the Temple at Jerusalem B.C. 168; the cleansing of the Temple and the Feast of Dedication B.C. 165; the gaining of complete independence by the Jewish nation B.C. 128; the passing of Judea under Rome B.C. 63; and the reign of the Vassal King Herod B.C. 37–4. On the death of Herod, who was reigning when Jesus was born, the kingdom was divided among

his three sons. Archelaus became Ethnarch of Judea, Samaria and Idumea. Herod Antipas became Tetrarch of Galilee and Perea. Philip became Tetrarch of Iturea and Trachonitis.

Socially, the Jews were proud of their history, their great men, their Temple, their special relation to Jehovah. They were proud in defeat not much less than in victory. In the period from the exile to the advent of Jesus the Jews had learned much of the world and the world had learned much of the Jews. If we would know the Jew socially in the world at the time we study, we shall have to visit him in all the chief cities of eastern civilization; we shall have to speak with him in many languages and dialects; we shall find him in as widely scattered districts as Rome and Babylon, Egypt and Greece. A few years later, on the celebration of the feast of Pentecost we find "at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven." And the author of the book of Acts enumerates among those present "Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, in Judea and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, in Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt and the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and sojourners from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians." Thus while at home politically the Jews had become the dwellers of an insignificant province under the government

of Rome, socially their influence had never reached farther than it did when "in the fullness of time" Jesus was born.

Further, the student should become familiar with the state of the nation and the times religiously. It must be recognized that there was a widespread decay of true religion throughout the Roman Empire, and even among the Jews, coupled with an extreme legalistic religiousness. On the other hand many weary ones were keeping fresh the memory of the old prophecies and anxiously looking for the coming of the Messianic King who should deliver them from all their burdens.

We will no more than mention here the great political, social and religious parties which flourished in the time of Jesus. A student of the times at the beginning of our era ought to make himself familiar with the tenets and character of the Pharisees, the orthodox legalistic religionists of the time; the Sadducees, the coldly rationalistic high-priestly party and their adherents; and the Essenes, the saintly party of Come-outers, liberty-loving and righteous.

Finally, it should be fully understood that for the Jewish race, when the bond of national independence gave way, the unfailing hope of a coming Messiah became the strongest unifying agency among all the descendents of Abraham.

THE BIRTH AND INFANCY OF JESUS.

About the middle of the eighth century after the founding of Rome there was hidden up in the hills of Galilee a small town containing possibly a population of two thousand people. The houses were queer shaped, flat-roofed buildings. There was a strange confusion of houses, threshing-floors and wine-presses. These were arranged in terraces irregularly set in the amphitheater-shaped hillside upon which the town was built. This was Nazareth, and it was not much different morally or religiously from the average village of Galilee, in spite of the question of Nathanael, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"

Nazareth was not a secluded place. One of the three caravan routes from Acco to Damascus passed through it. And Edersheim says: "Nazareth was also one of the great centers of Jewish Temple-life." It was in such a village that we read of Jesus that "the child grew, and waxed strong, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him."

Of the family of Jesus we know very little, and beyond the brief lines which we have in our gospels we know nothing of Joseph or Mary. We have given certain facts which are necessary for the gospel history and that is all.

When we open a biography of Lincoln or Grant or any other man of modern times we

expect to find many questions answered which, as we take up the study of Jesus, we shall find not even raised. Our gospels are strangely silent upon the details of the life of Jesus. But the same may be said of the authoritative biographies of such ancient men as Isaiah, Judas Maccabeus, Socrates or Plato. If we seek the reason for this we shall find it in the changed conditions of the age. In our day the printing press has made book-making rapid and easy. Steam and electricity have wrought a like change for book circulation. Ours is an age of cheap literature and universal reading. Men now write not so much because they have a message which must be delivered, but rather because there is money in it. Now the histories of Jesus were not written for that purpose. They were not written in response to the cry for "copy." Therefore we should hold two facts in mind when we study the life of Jesus and especially when we study the early life of Jesus. First, we should remember that any limitation or barrenness of detail, which we meet in the gospel narratives of Jesus, will be found paralleled in the records of any other great character of ancient times. No authentic biography of any ancient character can match for curiosity-satisfying minuteness our modern histories. And if we should find in opposition to this universal rule that the biographers of Jesus had made an exception, that alone would serve to raise in us sus-

picion of the whole. Even so, curiosity was not wanting in those olden times. Details which were made for the sake of wonder and curiosity may be found in abundance in the Apocryphal gospels, of which the so-called Gospel of Thomas is a good illustration. Cowper in his translation of the Apocryphal gospels, says of the Gospel of Thomas, "It may be viewed as a collection of foolish traditions, or fables, invented to supply an account of that period in our Lord's history, respecting which the genuine gospels are silent" (128f).

We should also remember a second fact when we turn to the study of the life of Jesus and find ourselves perplexed by the scantiness of the details given. The fact is that the design of the writers was manifestly other than to gratify mere curiosity. Speaking of "The Holy Family" Edersheim says: "We feel that the scantiness of particulars here supplied by the gospels, was intended to prevent the human interest from overshadowing the grand central fact, to which alone attention was to be directed. For, the design of the gospels was manifestly not to furnish a biography of Jesus the Messiah, but, in organic connection with the Old Testament, to tell the history of the long-promised establishment of the kingdom of God upon earth." The *biography* in the gospels is an incident, though a necessary one. The mere writing of biography was not the object which the writers

set before themselves, but was only an incident involved in the attainment of their real object, which was two-fold, namely, that others might know and believe the gospel message, and that thus believing they might have life "in his name." Read again the preface to Luke's Gospel, chapter i, 1–4. Luke says he writes to Theophilus (the Gospel is addressed to Theophilus), that he might "know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed." John states that his object in writing his Gospel narrative, as recorded in John xx, 30, 31, is "that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name."

And yet, what scanty details we have! How much more complete we think we would have made it all! But who shall say that we have not all the details which are in any wise necessary to the true object of the Gospel narratives? What we have is sufficient to span all eternity. That marvelous prologue of John's Gospel sweeps all eternity that is past. Read again John i, 1–18, which opens with majesty: "In the beginning was the Word." The twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew opens up the vision of judgment, and the last verse of the chapter looks forward through eternity.

Of Joseph and Mary we have the genealogies recorded by Matthew and Luke. And there are hints that render it well-nigh certain that both Joseph and Mary were in the line of descent

from David. And therefore when the census was taken, of which Luke tells us in the second chapter of his Gospel, "all went to enroll themselves, everyone to his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David; to enroll himself with Mary, who was betrothed to him, being great with child." And so it came to pass that Jesus was born in Bethlehem.

Two of the Gospel writers tell us that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. These writers are explicit upon this point. They state it as a fact. No doctrine is based upon the statement in these Gospels however nor is it anywhere else mentioned in the New Testament. We may also be reminded that there is really *no more mystery* involved in the miraculous conception of Jesus than there is in the beginning of every human life. Speaking of this part of the record Doctor C. W. Rishell said in the writer's hearing: "There the Virgin Birth is not made the basis of an argument for the divine nature of Jesus. We shall search in vain in The Gospels which record it for any such application of it. It is stated there as a fact but no conclusion of any kind, is drawn from or intimated in connection with it. Nor is the fact mentioned or implied or referred to in any other portion of

the New Testament. Paul and John, who so strongly emphasized the deity of Christ, do not argue that deity from the Virgin Birth. This does not destroy the fact of his miraculous conception, but it shows us that the writers of the New Testament laid no stress upon it. If Jesus was literally conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary he undoubtedly had a divine element in his nature. If, as some think, it is not to be taken literally, that divine element would not be thereby disproved."

When Jesus was eight days old he was circumcised according to Jewish law and christened, receiving the name of Jesus. And then being the first born son he was presented in due time in the Temple to be "redeemed" of the priest. This must have been at least thirty-one days after birth, and the price of redemption was five shekels, sanctuary money. The mother could not present herself for the rite of "purification" until forty-one days after the birth of a son, or eighty-one days after the birth of a daughter. In the case of Jesus it is probable that both rites were performed at the same visit to the temple.

Then came the Magi or wise men from the East. Of these men we know very little. We do not know when they came, nor do we even know how many of them there were. To our curiosity-driven minds the records are provokingly brief. We read of Herod's craftiness and

of his senseless and cruel murder of the children of Bethlehem "from two years old and under." It was because of Herod that the "Holy Family" fled to Egypt. When Herod died Joseph and Mary and the child returned, but, learning that Archelaus was Herod's successor, they withdrew into Galilee "and came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, that he should be called a Nazarene." And "the child grew, and waxed strong, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him." Then it was that the Sun of Righteousness was rising in the eastern sky. Then it was that the Light of the World was dawning. We now believe that that Sun of Righteousness was none other than the Eternal Son of God. That Babe of Bethlehem was to be the Light of the World, the Sinless Man, the Christ of God come to earth for men.

THE CHILDHOOD HOME AND SCHOOL LIFE OF JESUS.

We have no detailed description of the home in which Jesus lived, nor of his school-life. We do know, however, how most of the people of Nazareth lived, and what in general was the education given to the child of the average Jewish parents. We have besides a few marks which will help us to a good idea of what the home and school-life of Jesus must have been.

The house was, no doubt, square and low, and

it had no windows; the door was relied upon for light and ventilation. There was, probably, only one room, though it may possibly have been an exception to the rule, and have had two, or even three rooms. There were no tables and little furniture of any kind. There would be a few rugs on the floor, and a few garments hung on the walls.

The family which lived in this house was numerous, consisting of Joseph and Mary, five sons and at least two daughters—in Mark vi, 3, reference is made to the "sisters" of Jesus. The boys were Jesus, James, Joseph, Jude and Simon.

Among the household utensils would, no doubt, be a lamp, a broom, a "bushel" and a mill. The bushel turned bottom up would serve as table. Chairs would not be needed around that table. The mill was a hand affair, and Mary and her daughters every morning ground the meal needed for the day. The principal meal was at noon. Before sitting down all washed or purified their hands, which was a religious ceremony. Following the custom of the age, Joseph would give thanks, and Jesus, as the oldest son, when a young man, would offer brief prayer. The meal though simple would be substantial. Butter, cheese, honey and parched corn no doubt were there. Sometimes grapes, figs, locusts and meat would be found on the list. They did not suffer want in that home. The necessities of

life are largely relative, and their requirements were few.

As soon as Jesus could speak, his mother taught him verses of the Bible, else he was a much neglected child among Jewish children, and we know he was not neglected. She first taught him Deut. vi, 4, 5: "Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah: and Thou shalt love Jehovah Thy God with all Thy soul, and with all Thy might." With this proclamation of the unity of God, she also taught Him the special relation of the children of Israel to God, Deut. vii, 7: "Jehovah did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all peoples: but because Jehovah loveth you."

The family of Jesus were strict Jews. Joseph and Mary were in the habit of going regularly to Jerusalem to the feast of the Passover. James was always, even after becoming a Christian, a strict Jew. Professor Stapfer suggests that "the piety of Jesus was no doubt of another character; and therefore, it early began to distress his mother and brothers. The day was to come when they would try to hold him back, to keep him with them; would even go so far as to suspect him of insanity."

Jesus no doubt was sent to school when he was six years old. The audience-room of the synagogue was the place in small villages where the school was held; in larger towns the school

was held in a separate building. Here Jesus attended school until he was ten or twelve years old. Here he learned to read, write and figure. At the close of this period he in a sense came to his majority. He became a "son of the law;" that is, subject to the discipline of the law. Like all the other Jews of Palestine, Jesus probably morning and evening repeated the "Shema" as the faithful Roman Catholic tells her beads. The Shema included nineteen verses—Deut. vi, 4–9; xi, 13–21; Num. xv, 37–41. Later Jesus would characterize much of this as "Vain repetitions."

On Saturday (the Jewish Sabbath) Jesus would be sent to the special children's service at the synagogue.

"Such," says Stapfer, "was the placid and humble childhood of him who holds the first place in the history of humanity, and who has exercised a decisive influence upon the destinies of the world; of him whose work is, without contradiction, the most remarkable the annals of the past have bequeathed to our meditation; and whose life divides the history of our race into two parts which nothing can ever blend together."

The books of the period, together with a study of persons contemporary with Jesus, will show us fairly well what the child Jesus was taught to believe. Jesus and James were undoubtedly educated alike. They probably went to school

together, learned the stories of Jewish history together, and in James, the strict Jew, ascetic and austere, pious, temperate and righteous, we no doubt have the ripe, natural product of the teaching and training which the two brothers had together.

"THE EIGHTEEN SILENT YEARS."

Only forty words are devoted by the author of our third Gospel to direct biographical statement concerning the life of Jesus during those years which intervened between his visit to Jerusalem at the age of twelve and the opening of his public ministry at the age of thirty: "And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth; and he was subject unto them: and his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men" (Luke ii, 51, 52). The years in the life of Jesus from twelve to thirty have been known, therefore, as "the eighteen silent years." And yet many authentic hints have come down to us out of which may be gathered the sure outline even of those years.

Jesus was a carpenter. This we infer with practical certainty from Mark vi, 3. So also was Joseph a carpenter (Matt. xiii, 55). From Matt. xiii, 55, 56, we also infer that Jesus had at least four brothers and two sisters.

Edersheim ("Life and Times," etc., I, 252)

says: "Among the Jews the contempt for manual labor, which was one of the painful characteristics of heathenism, did not exist. On the contrary, it was deemed a religious duty, frequently and most earnestly insisted upon, to learn some trade." When Jesus returned to Nazareth at the age of twelve he learned a trade, possibly in the shop which Joseph owned. When Joseph died, which was probably before many years—since we have no later mention of him in the gospel narratives—Jesus became the support of the family. I doubt not that this fact of Jesus having been a workingman, the chief support of a large family, has done much to make him beloved by the common people during the centuries.

In a normal, healthy life the man is the sure fulfillment of what the child has been. And by this principle of judgment we can tell something of what Jesus was and what he did during those "eighteen silent years" in Nazareth. The law of Jesus' life in manhood was the law of service. Read again Matt. xx, 25–28. I think we see here in the full flower what the members of that Nazareth home-circle saw in the bud during those years of toil and service when Jesus was working at his trade and supporting by his labors his widowed mother and younger brothers and sisters. Then, again, in his manhood Jesus lived a life of prayer (Luke iii, 21; Mark i, 35; Luke v, 16; vi, 12). He won all his victories

by prayer. Do not we find in all this the sure and natural fulfillment of what Jesus was during those eighteen long years in Nazareth?

I find, therefore, that the message of those years, when 'tis said, "Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men," brings to the young life of our time these three lessons: First, that menial labor is in itself honorable, respectable, and dignified. Jesus of Nazareth was a workingman. Second, that the way to true greatness is by helpful service. Jesus was truly great; he served others. This he did as a young man, giving ready and willing service for the support of his own kindred, and no doubt by unnumbered gracious ministrations to the needy ones about him. Third, as a young man Jesus must have often been in prayer and meditation, else his mature life of prayer is something more than fulfillment of his early years.

Finally, never think less of one because he works; Jesus' own example has stamped all honest work as clean and honorable. Never despise true service. Jesus taught by precept and example that only one who truly serves is truly great. And let no one forget the importance, for one's own life, of prayer and religious thoughtfulness. "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of."

THE WILDERNESS TEMPTATIONS;—A KEY TO THE INTERPRETATION OF THE LIFE OF JESUS.

Temptation comes to all. To be tempted is not sin. To yield to temptation is sin. The gospel writers say that Jesus was tempted, yet without sin. There are those who find it difficult to think of Jesus as being tempted. Would the fact that Jesus was a holy being have any bearing upon the question of his being tempted? No and yes. No,—since the possibility of being tempted depends not upon the fact of one's being holy or unholy, but rather upon the fact of an individual's having appetites and desires, and avenues of pleasure and of pain; yes,—since the holier one is, the more one can appreciate the desirability of the good thing which, it is suggested and promised by the tempter, may be, by the unholy means suggested, secured, and further, yes,—since, as Wescott well observes, "sympathy with the sinner in his trial does not depend on the experience of sin, but on the experience of the strength of the temptation to sin, which only the sinless can know in its full intensity. He who falls, yields before the last strain." Therefore, it is written: "For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

The New Testament narratives of the Wilder-

ness Temptations of Jesus are found in Matt. iv, 1–11; Mark i, 12, 13; and Luke iv, 1–13.

A number of questions are raised by a study of these narratives which are interesting but not of the greatest importance to us. In our study of Jesus under temptation, it would be a mistake to give these minor questions undue relative consideration. For instance: Did Satan appear to Jesus in bodily form? Could you and I have seen Satan if we had been with Jesus during those forty days of religious fasting? Did Jesus wholly abstain from food during those forty days? From whom did the Gospel writers get their information about the temptations of Jesus in the wilderness? Did Satan take Jesus in his physical body to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the Temple, or to a high mountain? These questions are all interesting and I can well conceive how their consideration might, under some circumstances, be really profitable.

But the immediately important questions for us I conceive to be (1) What are the New Testament narratives of the temptations? That is, just what were the temptations which Jesus endured in the wilderness during the period immediately following his baptism by John? (2) Were they real temptations? (3) What, if any, meaning have they for us?

(1) First, what were the temptations of Jesus? Just what took place? The New Testa-

ment record consists of the narratives of what took place in the inner consciousness of Jesus during the period immediately following his baptism by John. The form of the narratives, especially of Matthew and Luke, is manifestly symbolical or figurative. But no words could have more literally set forth what is believed to have taken place in the inner consciousness of Jesus during those days of testing and fasting.

The question has been cited as an interesting one: From whom did the Gospel writers get their information concerning the temptations of Jesus? No doubt, Jesus told the story of those days to his disciples many times before his death upon the Cross on Calvary. The New Testament narratives apparently sum up in the three temptations, as recorded, the general substance and forms of temptation which came upon Jesus during the forty days in the wilderness. And it will be seen by a study of those temptations that they comprehend essentially every kind of temptation which can ever come to a human soul. Following Matthew's order, they were as follows:

(1) An appeal to satisfy personal, physical need in a manner contrary to God's will. First, be it noted that Jesus had just been assured, by a wonderful spiritual experience in connection with and following his baptism, of the Father's approval of him as the Son, and Jesus was now

clearly conscious of the possession of extraordinary powers. The question of that hour with him would be as to how he should use these powers of the possession of which he had now become conscious. Through days of meditation, prayer and reflection, tempting and trial, Jesus was to reach the answer to that question. What that answer should be would determine the policy and method of all his life work in the fulfillment of his mission. If a study of the Wilderness temptations shall furnish us with an answer to the question indicated, we shall be furnished at the same time with a key to the interpretation of the life of Jesus.

Secondly, in getting at the character of the first temptation mentioned by Matthew, we see that Jesus was not here tempted to do anything in itself wrong. The method of attack upon him was by suggesting that he was possibly mistaken in his interpretation of his own religious experience. "If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." Here also came the suggestion to make a wrong use of those unique powers, of which Jesus was now the conscious possessor. But Jesus would not be a mere wonder-worker. He here, as ever, put first things first. Seek ye first not bread, but seek ye first the kingdom of God, and, therefore, without argument about his own divine Sonship, Jesus answered by using the words of Deuteronomy viii, 3: "Man shall not live by bread alone,

but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

(2) The second temptation took the form of an appeal to go about his great work of winning the multitude by means of sensationalism. But Jesus would not even win the attention of the multitude, important to the prosecution of his work as that was, by the use of any other methods than those which might be used by any human being. He would win all his victories under human conditions and in spite of human limitations. So only could his work and life be that of a faithful High Priest and helper for us. In his refusal to adopt the methods of sensationalism may be found a lesson for us when we are tempted to make trial of God for sensational purposes to-day.

(3) The third temptation (Matthew iv, 8f.) was one to dip the colors in order to win the world. This temptation was perhaps the most perilous of all. Jesus sought to benefit all the world. To this end the world must be reached and won. Therefore, came the Satanic suggestion, "the end justifies the means." This was the third and last temptation, and by this, Jesus recognized the face of Satan, who is "a liar, and the father thereof" (John viii, 44). "Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence Satan: for it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." So was Jesus tempted like as we are tempted, yet without sin.

Were the temptations of Jesus real temptations? We do not doubt it. To have faked such an experience would have been unworthy of anyone, and much more of Jesus. Could Jesus have yielded to the temptations? If he could not then he was not tempted. Did he triumph as Son of Man, or as Son of God? If he was not tempted as we are tempted, and if he did not triumph as we may triumph, then is the record no help to us, no challenge to us nor encouragement for us. He was tempted as every man is tempted, and he won the victory as every man may win. The stories of the temptations of Jesus have pregnant meaning for us. They challenge us to trust God's way; to obey God and not to presume upon Him; to worship God and serve Him only. They greatly encourage us, since the victories which he won were won under the same limitations and conditions which obtain with us, and therefore, as he has won so also by like means may we.

THE MIRACLES OF JESUS.

There was a time when people believed in the divinity of Jesus because of the miracles which he worked. They believed in Christ because of what they knew of the miracles.

To-day we would probably more truly say that men believe in miracles because of what they know of Christ.

As one who believes that Jesus worked the

miracles recorded in The Gospels I am convinced, with Professor Sanday, that in so doing he made this sympathetic adaptation of the methods of his teaching to the ideas and expectations of the people of his own time.

We have already seen how—Jesus being conscious of the possession of extraordinary powers —the temptation in the wilderness grew out of the question how those powers should be used.

A study of Jesus' experience under temptation affords a key to many hard problems in the interpretation of the life and work of Jesus. Professor Sanday observes (Article, "Jesus Christ," Hastings' Bib. Dict., Vol. II, 626): "The public ministry of Jesus wears the aspect it does, not because of limitations imposed from without, but of limitations imposed from within."

The people sought for signs and wonders and miracles. And they thought of these as the normal and natural way for God to make special manifestation of Himself and His power. Jesus wished the people to see God in all holy ministrations and to know Him in all his works. And therefore, he never gave free course to his powers to work miracles according to the current ideas and expectations of the people.

He did, with certain carefully self-imposed limitations, consent to do some miracles, but ever with strict reference to the purpose of his mission, and always in perfect accord with the prin-

ciples which he adopted during the temptation in the wilderness for the guidance of his life.

Sanday further observes: "He steadily refused to work miracles for any purely self-regarding end. If the fact that he works miracles at all is a sympathetic adaptation to the beliefs and expectations of the time, those beliefs are *schooled* and *criticized* while they are adopted (Matt. xii, 39; xvi, 1f. and John iv, 48), the element of mere display, the element of self-assertion, even of self-preservation, is eliminated from them. They are studiously restricted to the purposes of the mission."

And Professor Sanday has further pointed out that the miracles of Jesus are restricted in three ways. They are restricted (1) in their subject-matter, (2) in the conditions under which they are wrought and (3) in the manner of their publication. And this shows how and in what sense the miracles could be described by Jesus as "*The works which none other did.*" They were wholly unique as thus restricted.

But it was by these miracles which he did, as thus restricted, that Jesus at once corrected the current idea of miracles as mere crude signs and wonders, and also by these miracles did Jesus correct the current idea and expectation of a Messiah who was to gather around himself great crowds and establish an outward and temporal kingdom.

By these miracles Jesus *not only corrected*

the current expectations of Messianic signs and wonders, and the current expectations of the Messiah and the Messiah's kingdom, but further did he *arrest and grip* and hold the attention of a wonder-seeking age, upon himself and God the Father until they who heard his words and saw his works were judged thereby, according as they saw and loved, or saw and hated both Jesus and the Father. So could Jesus say—"If I had not done among them the works which none other did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father."

We have thus seen (1) How the experience of Jesus in the wilderness affords us a key to the paradoxical character of Christ's wonderful works known as miracles. We have seen also (2) What instruments for teaching these miracles in Christ's hands became. And we might go on to see (3) That, without some such wonderful works by which they *of a wonder-expecting age* might recognize the grace and personality of God come to men, there would be no way by which we could explain the faith and life and vitality of the early church.

Thus far I have spoken of the miracles of Jesus as taking for granted (1) The objective possibility of miracles and (2) The inherent credibility of miracles.

It might be well to consider in a few words the possibility and the credibility of miracles. Many have denied the possibility of miracles.

Now it may be argued that in any systematic and thorough-going materialism there is no place for miracles. But it may also be said that to systematic and thorough-going materialism all action of mental and spiritual forces is impossible.

If anyone believes that the operations of spiritual forces are as real and familiar as are material forces, then may that one find easy illustration of the way in which the spiritual order may intrude itself into the physical order. For example, we may point to the action of the human will, of which the phenomenal effect may be the motion of one's own body, or as when one wills to lift a book and does lift it, even though according to the law of gravitation the book would not rise but fall.

When we let spiritual agents into our conception of the all-including universe (and their being is certainly involved in the action of our own will and the processes of our own thinking) then is the way open for us to conceive God as the freest and highest of these.

As J. H. Bernhard declares ("Miracle," "Hastings' Dict." III, 380), "Our conception of the universe is partial and inadequate unless we realize that a great Spiritual Being is the ultimate source of all the manifold activities which it daily and hourly presents to our view. And if, with this in our minds, we approach an anomalous phenomenon which seems to us to interrupt

the continuity of physical sequence, we shall have to enumerate among possible explanations this other, that it is due to the direct volition of the Deity. If we are satisfied that this *is* its explanation, we call it a miracle."

With this all-including view of the universe, physical and spiritual, miracles are not only objectively possible, but, upon proper evidence, inherently credible also.

And miracles as thus conceived could never become a disturbance in the law and order of the all-including universe.

The one totally incongruous marvel of marvels, as introducing disturbance in the law and order of the universe, is sin.

THE LOGIC OF THE RESURRECTION.

The Christian world never had greater reason than now to believe that Jesus, who was called Christ, "suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; the third day he rose from the dead."

Reason justifies such a faith. If Jesus was in other respects what he claimed to be, or what his contemporaries believed him to be, then we would naturally expect him to have overcome the world and conquer death. The rational world, Christian and non-Christian and heathen, freely concedes Jesus to have been the noblest man of all ages. It is not comprehended how reason, which concedes so much to Jesus, can at the same

time sweep aside his most unique claims and pretensions for himself. No man, even in his own thought, convicteth Jesus of sin, and yet he is recorded by the gospel writers to have foretold his own death and resurrection—Matt. xx, 17–19; Mark x, 32–34; Luke xviii, 31–34; John, "Farewell Discourses."

Distinguished doubters like Lord Bolinbroke, Professor Huxley and John Stuart Mill, all freely concede the transcendent beauty and worth of the Christian Scriptures. But no more vital doctrine is set forth in these Scriptures than that of the resurrection.

Reason, which freely concedes so much concerning Jesus and these records of his life among men, certainly justifies our faith in this great supporting doctrine of the whole, the doctrine of the resurrection.

Lyman Abbott has insisted that our belief in no alleged event of ancient history has been so buttressed by historic evidence as has the resurrection of Jesus.

Our belief in the resurrection of Jesus is fortified: by the separate records of independent historians; by the recorded testimony of eye witnesses, embracing large numbers, under the most varied circumstances; by the acknowledged fact that a company of despairing disciples, within a few days, became a band of invincible, conquering heroes; by the fact of every early Christian institution; by every early Christian

writing, those by Paul, Peter, John, James, Luke, Origen, Justin Martyr, and scores of others; by the moral and religious revolution that followed the preaching everywhere of the alleged resurrection. It is too much even for credulity to believe what those who doubt the resurrection would have us believe. We can not believe that the greatest good which ever came to this old earth, came through the preaching of a lie. The logic of the resurrection is well expressed by the belief of the Christian world that Jesus "suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead and buried; the third day he rose from the dead." Historic evidence and the very soul of reason shut us up to such a conclusion.

In the light of modern science, psychology, and philosophy we can begin to see that the resurrection of Jesus was inevitable. If it were not so, then would crass materialism have the final word in the explanation of the universe and the Creator would finally be overcome by the creature matter. If Jesus was what you and I and the human mind universal believe him to have been, then he must not have been held by death. "The last enemy that shall be abolished is death." But death can be an enemy only as it can cut short the progress of life. The inspired instincts of the race have grasped this truth. Witness the unsystematized hopes of all peoples. Witness also the Scriptures of Israel. Witness also the systematized hopes and faith

of the modern mind. The wonder of wonders past all human comprehension would have been for Jesus not to have been raised from the hold and power of death. Being what he was he must have risen from the dead. The logic of the resurrection is well expressed by the Apostle as follows: "Now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the first fruits of them that are asleep."

In the letter to the Corinthians, from which the above words are taken, is the oldest written record of the resurrection that has come down to us. It has probably occurred to many of you that the authors of the New Testament nowhere furnish us any labored argument to prove the resurrection, but they refer to it always as a fact fully believed in the church, and therefore, they give us such evidence as they do only incidentally and as narrative. In 1 Corinthians xv, the Apostle more nearly approaches an argument to prove the resurrection than do any of the other New Testament writers, yet even there his argument has to do with that which is confessedly the clearest ground of the Christian hope. Paul himself accepted the fact of the resurrection upon the testimony of his own consciousness of having seen the risen Lord, as also upon the testimony of Peter and possibly other of the apostles with whom he had early become acquainted at Jerusalem. And so Paul wrote to the Corinthians "For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received, how

that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures; and that he appeared to Cephas; then to the twelve; then he appeared to above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain until now, but some are fallen asleep; then he appeared to James; then to all the apostles; and last of all, as unto one born out of due time, he appeared to me also" (1 Cor. xv, 3–8). Paul makes his argument not to prove the resurrection of Christ but rather to emphasize the importance of the doctrine as the very basis of the Christian faith, and to show its relation to the hope of immortality. Upon the undoubted fact of Christ's resurrection Paul reared the structure of his argument for the hope of the general resurrection. There was among the Corinthians a danger of unbelief in the general resurrection of the dead. Paul met such skepticism by the logic set forth in his letter.

The manner of the resurrection of Christ is not revealed to us. The resurrection is stated as a fact, and it is presented as the surest ground of hope that we too shall live again. The preaching of the Apostles was full of the resurrection. Their Gospel has been spoken of as the Gospel of the resurrection. Their own faith had revived only when they were convinced beyond any doubting that Jesus had actually risen. Everybody in Jerusalem knew of the

crucifixion. It had seemed to all the disciples and friends of Jesus as if their highest hopes had been thwarted by the cross. Of course the enemies of Jesus, as well as the indifferent ones, were sure that now the end had come. One more fanatic had paid the penalty of his folly on that hill outside the city walls. Such was the situation when upon that historic day Jesus hanged upon the cross.

The Christian world has believed concerning Jesus that "the third day he rose from the dead." May we at the beginning of the twentieth century find any natural reason why he should have thus risen?

We answer that Christ rose from the dead and "ascended into heaven," because it was necessary that he, who was for a time incarnate in the flesh, should go away, that is, be de-localized through death in order that he might come in the Holy Spirit to sustain and help men everywhere without reference to any particular location in the body. But not only so, it was necessary that the disciples should be convinced beyond any doubt that their Master, Jesus, was thus alive after the transition which men call death, else they could never again exercise receiving faith in him. Therefore, did Jesus vouchsafe such marvelous appearings and disappearings to his disciples and others during the days after the resurrection. When they were made sure beyond all doubting that Jesus was

alive after having died upon the cross, then indeed there was nothing needed for him to do but to give to them the Great Commission to go and teach others the same Good News of life and immortality which they had learned, and then "he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty."

We have not chosen in this place to marshal the historical evidence of the resurrection, though we are firmly convinced that such evidence, direct and indirect, is most conclusive. If any of us have any doubt as to the reality of the resurrection of Christ we may well ask ourselves to consider what would have been the outcome if Jesus had not been raised from the dead? Upon this question I will give to you the words of Doctor Gross Alexander who says ("Son of Man," 363ff.): "The followers of Jesus were few in number, they were without prestige, without influence, without learning; in short, they were peasants and women. The world was not friendly to them. Jews and pagans had combined to destroy their leader, and had succeeded. The forlorn followers of that leader the world did not even pity. It despised them. They, on their part, with the loss of their leader had lost hope and courage, and they cowered before the world and slunk away from its scorn and its hate.

"If Jesus had remained among the dead, his followers would have bidden an eternal farewell

to their Leader and Lord and to all their hopes. They would have accepted the verdict of fate and of their enemies, that his death was the end-all. They would have had no Gospel to preach. The Acts of the Apostles would never have been enacted, and The Gospels would never have been written. Paul would never have been converted, his Gospel would never have been preached, his epistles would never have been penned. Christianity could never have been established; the renovation of humanity would never have taken place; and the kingdom of God would never have been known. The world would still be rotting with the corpse of Jesus."

The great German critic, Keim, expresses essentially the same idea in the following words: "All evidences go to prove that the belief in the Messiah would have died out without the living Jesus; and by the return of the apostles to the synagogue and to Judaism, the gold of the words of Jesus would have been buried in the dust of oblivion. The greatest of men would have passed away and left no trace. For a time Galilee would have preserved some truth and some fiction about him; but his cause would have produced no religious exaltation and no Paul.

"The evidence that Jesus was alive was necessary, after an earthly downfall which was so unexampled. The evidence that he was alive was given, by his own impulsion and by the will of

God. The Christianity of to-day owes to this evidence, first its Lord, and next its own existence. Thus, though much has fallen away, the secure faith-fortress of the resurrection of Jesus remains." By the resurrection then was given the crowning and divine sanction to all of Jesus' life in the flesh; his unique claims for himself were here shown to be both reasonable and sure.

Again, Jesus rose from the dead in order to lead captivity captive, to free humanity from the fear of death. To us who believe that Jesus rose from the dead (and we cannot disbelieve it) the resurrection is the sure proof of immortality. Since the resurrection of Jesus we know that death does not end all. As Keim has said: "The hope of immortality which ran through mankind as a contradicted sign, has become a bright light and clear truth through him alone; spiritually, through his word, and visibly through his act. He has dissipated anxious dread by showing the firm ground of a heavenly future for the children of God."

Finally, what to-day for us is the logic of the resurrection? This cannot be better answered than by considering what would be the situation with us to-day if someone could take away our belief that Jesus did rise from the dead. If you would take away our faith in the resurrection, you would take our New Testament; the Christ of whom we learn in the New Testament; the church founded upon confessed faith in the

Christ; the Christian Sunday upon which we had believed that He had risen; and all Christian institutions which rest upon faith in a risen Christ. Take away this day our faith in the resurrection and you impeach human nature at its best; you involve the origin of the world's best civilization in the grossest mystery, and you make an unanswerable riddle of all the Christian centuries. Even as Paul reasons "and if Christ hath not been raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most pitiable." Psychology, and philosophy, history, faith and cogent reasoning, combine to constitute the logic of the resurrection still invincible.

ON THE COMING OF JESUS.

The last Tuesday before the crucifixion was a strangely eventful day in the public ministry of Jesus. It was clearly discerned by Jesus, and at least dimly understood by the disciples, that hours of real crisis were fast approaching. When, late in the day, Jesus was going out from the temple some of the disciples called his attention to the great stones of the buildings, and their imposing grandeur. Jesus replied with a prophecy of the temple's overthrow. The disciples dimly understood that in some deep sense Jesus would be present in the fulfillment of this prophecy. When Jesus, a little later in the

evening, sat on the Mount of Olives with his disciples, they questioned him: "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming (Greek, "presence"), and of the end of the world?" And Jesus began his answer to them by saying: "Take heed that no man lead you astray." And in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew we have vague and somewhat disconnected notes upon the conversation which followed.

It may be noted that the expression "second coming," as used in contrast to the first coming of Jesus, is not found in the Bible. It would be helpful to clear thinking if the expression "second coming" could be dropped, at least when any attempt is being made to interpret Biblical teachings upon this subject. The interpretation of Biblical teaching concerning the "coming" or comings of Jesus is difficult at best. The twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew is in part as obscure as anything in the book of Revelation.

The comings and goings, appearings and disappearings, the presence and revelation of Jesus were all with essentially one purpose or aim. And the manner, the method, was that in every case which would best emphasize the reality of the unseen. The same is true to-day. The purpose to be accomplished was, and is, primarily to make men everywhere aware of God, and of the real world of the unseen.

Incidentally Jesus comes—that is, appears, or makes himself manifest—in judgment, in great crises, in the clouds of heaven, in a truer appreciation of the glory of the sun, moon and stars. Wars have heralded his coming. Earthquakes have won attention, and famines have made men to love his appearing. The "abomination of desolation" standing where he ought not, has been the sign and prophecy of Jesus' sure presence in judgment, destruction, restoration, power, and final glory. "Let him that readeth understand." Jesus came. Jesus is coming. Jesus shall come. Blessed are the eyes of some who will read these words, for you have loved his appearing, and your eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord!

Jesus often spoke upon this subject. He taught of his coming in historical crises, in the presence and person of the Holy Spirit, in spiritual fellowship, in the hour of death, and in judgment at the end of the world, and to receive his own into everlasting glory in the kingdom of God.

It is not strange that the early struggling, persecuted Christians should have eagerly looked for the immediate return in bodily form of Jesus, to avenge them of their foes, and to visibly reign upon the earth. But the most real coming of Jesus is not now, nor has it ever been, a bodily coming. The fact of real and abiding import-

ance has always been the spiritual fact, the coming of the invisible God into the conscious life of men. Of this coming no man, nor even the Son of Man, can foretell the times or the seasons, for this real coming of Jesus is always conditioned upon the attitude of human souls. Jesus always comes "in the fullness of time." And he always comes as a "savor of life unto life" to those individuals who are ready, but "of death unto death" for those who have not believed he would come at all, and who, therefore, are not ready.

One immediate purpose of Jesus' teaching was always to get men's hopes and expectations away from the idea of a merely physical coming to something which is more real, and which can be more universal. He would have men everywhere look for the coming into their lives of a presence which can "abide" with them when sun, moon and stars have rolled into the ruins of a forgotten past. This presence of the Lord Jesus can, and will, come only to those who "watch" and wait. "Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only. . . . Therefore, be ye also ready; for in an hour that ye think not, the Son of Man cometh."

THOUGHTS ON THE ASCENSION.

Matthew and John have left no narrative of the ascension of the Lord Jesus. Mark refers to it, but only in the appendix (xvi, 19) to his Gospel. Luke closes his Gospel history with the story of the ascension. Wescott and Hort say: "The ascension apparently did not lie within the proper scope of The Gospels, as seen in their genuine texts; its true place was at the head of The Acts of the Apostles, as the preparation for the day of Pentecost, and thus the beginning of the history of the church." The author of The Acts says of the last meeting of the disciples and Jesus: "As they were looking, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight." Basing its belief upon these Scripture records, the Christian world has confidently affirmed concerning Jesus Christ that "He ascended into heaven."

It is because I believe that too much insistence can not be placed upon the importance of becoming familiar with the real meaning of the ascension that I offer the following suggestions concerning the doctrine that "He ascended into heaven."

And, first of all, it should be noted that the really important questions pertaining to the ascension of Jesus do not have anything to do with the manner or form of that event. The manner or form of Jesus' going away was as

mysterious, undoubtedly, as was the manner or form of his coming. But neither did his coming nor going involve any more of real and unexplained mystery than do the coming and going of every human life. When Jesus "ascended into heaven," what was it that really took place? This much seems assured: If that which took place in the ascension had not taken place, then the events of Pentecost could not have occurred.

In our effort to understand the story, we must not dwell too much on the form of words or imagery, but rather must we seek the ideas which are half-veiled and half-revealed by the words of time and space in which the ideas are set forth.

"And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us;" that is, the all-comprehending expression, or Word, became localized, for the sake of a tremendous emphasis, in one man, Christ Jesus, that in him God might be so declared unto men that as men should receive him they would thereby "receive power" to be true and loyal children of God. And all this was certainly "expedient" for all men. But when Jesus had, with concentrated local emphasis, declared the true and universal love and fatherhood of God, and the consequent brotherhood of man, and had demonstrated, in his own person, how the kingdom of God can, and may come, through the doing of God's will, under human conditions, then did he declare to his disciples: "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not

away, the Comforter will not come unto you." Then did it come to pass that this which had been actually realized in an individual and local way, by the incarnation, should be possible of realization in a world-wide way, and for all time, by the ascension. And this de-localization again of the Eternal Word of God by the ascension was as expedient for mankind, considering man's ever manifest and evolving needs, as was the localization of the Eternal Word by the incarnation. So, and so only, could be realized the universal coming of the "Spirit of Truth," because so only could the human mind be so freed from the contracting bondage of a merely local and fleshly worship, that it might be able to receive and be led by the Spirit of Truth when he should come. Thus alone could the glory of the Eternal Word, in whom is "the life" which "is the light of men," be progressively realized, until in all the life and activities of men, it should be beheld in holy rapture, "as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Such, then, for all mankind, was the expediency of Jesus' ascension.

And so it came to pass that "he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty." But where is "the right hand of God"? It is in that timeless and spaceless and measureless world of the unseen whence Jesus came at the time of his incarnation.

But much of our confusion, when we have

thought of the ascension, has come from the chief place in our thought having been given to "clouds," and time and space relations. The late Bishop Wescott says: "This danger besets us in its gravest shape when we endeavor to give distinctness to the unseen world. We transfer, and we must transfer, the language of earth, the imagery of succession in time and space, to an order of beings to which, as far as we know, it is wholly inapplicable. We can not properly employ such terms as 'before' and 'after,' 'here' and 'there,' of God or of spirit. . . . While, then, we are constrained to use words of time and space, and to speak of going up and coming down, of present and future, in regard to the spirit-world and Christ's glorified life, we must remember that such language belongs to our imperfect conceptions as we now are, and not to realities themselves. If once we can feel that the imagery in which the glories of the world to come are described is only imagery, we can dwell upon it with ever-increasing intelligence and without distraction."

Let us then not think of the ascension of Jesus with so much emphasis upon the change of position, or the direction, or the manner of his going, as upon the change of the mode of his presence. Jesus ceased to be present with his disciples under one mode of appearing, which was limited by the conditions of time and space, in order that he might be manifestly present with them, and

with all others, under another mode of appearing which would not be limited by any conditions of time and space.

If the kingdom of God in Christ was to be builded upon earth, it was necessary that the disciples should be fully convinced that the real and living Christ was not limited to the conditions of time and space, since only thus can he be present with different persons, at different places, at the same time.

It was to teach these all-important lessons that the disciples were permitted to see those remarkable appearings, and no less remarkable disappearings, during those forty days following the resurrection. "These lessons," says Bishop Wescott, "were not finished by the resurrection. The appearances of Jesus during the great forty days, however mysterious, still set him in connection with particular places and times. It was therefore 'expedient' that he should 'go away' in order that his disciples might feel him near them always and everywhere." And that is what we acknowledge to have taken place when we say, "he ascended into heaven."

VIII

OF THE INCREASE OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

A CHRISTMAS MEDITATION.

For the solving of most human problems, it is not more sight that is needed, but more insight. Not by statistics and tables are most important questions answered. The kingdom cometh not with observation. The true signs of the times are for those only who have insight. It is so with the problem of the progress of Christ's kingdom in the earth. It was not by sight, but by insight, that the ancient prophet was able to say: "And the government shall be upon his shoulder: . . . and of peace there shall be no end" (Isaiah ix, 6, 7).

Mere signs and symbols, tables and observation, are not to be despised. These have their use. But the greatest signs can only be discerned by those who have somehow come into vital touch with God, and who are thus responsive to the things of God. To those who can rightly discern and interpret the signs of the times today it will appear that Isaiah's prophecy is now coming into fulfillment with unparalleled rapidity.

But as a most important preliminary to any serious meditation upon the progress of Christ's

kingdom, careful note should be taken of the significant conviction that "the government shall be upon his shoulder," which the course of recent philosophical thought has forced upon the mind of this generation.

The course of our meditation may run somewhat as follows: All that the human mind can rationally conceive may be included in the three ideas—humanity, the world, and God. Without God no rationally assignable origin or cause of humanity or the world is possible. Without God no rational relation between humanity and the world can be affirmed or imagined. But with God, free, intelligent, purposive, in the continuous outgoing of whose will and purpose both humanity and the world have all their being, we may have some rational understanding of the origin of both, and of the relation which, for reason and knowledge exists between them.

If knowledge for us is to be possible at all, and if our thinking may ever be regarded as leading to true conclusions, it can only be because at the center of things is free intelligence, purpose and will, as the expression of whose will humanity and the world exist.

If we reason thus correctly, then God works for ends. And we can not think of God as setting before Himself as ultimate end, in creation, anything less than a perfected humanity and a perfected world. The more we learn of the world the surer do we become that no will

contrary to God's will has had any determinative part in its making. But in the perfecting of humanity God's will has been hindered at many turns by man's own will. The universal possibility of such interference is involved in the fundamental nature of free humanity. But here also, for the individual, and also for the race, the wages of sin, that is, of interference with God's will, is death, while the gift of God to all who do His will is eternal life. Wherefore, since God is God, in final humanity, the humanity which shall finally survive, the will of God shall be fully realized. And since according to the highest rational intuitions of the race, Jesus is God manifest, it follows as sure inference that "the government shall be upon his shoulder."

The foregoing conclusion of modern philosophical speculation may be followed by a survey of our modern sky for any signs of the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. If Jesus was God incarnate, that is, manifest in one man, he was also the prophecy of the coming of a divinely filled humanity. The progress of Christ's kingdom is the progress of God's incarnation among men. Jesus came for this end to bring life. The true increase of his kingdom has been the increase of true life among men. And it is not without its lesson that the estimate which society places upon human life has greatly advanced in a century. George A. Gordon declares, "slowly and in spite of all opposing forces life itself

has been winning the chief place in thought. For the first time in history, in the nineteenth century, the people have made their appearance. . . . The chief concern of the nineteenth century is a concern for man" ("New Epoch for Faith," 28).

When the ideals of Christ shall dominate the lives of men and rule in human society, then shall it be realized that the government of humanity "shall be upon his shoulder." And until that day shall fully come, in such degree as Christ's ideals are recognized and enthroned in human society and government, shall it be true that "of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end."

Again, the nineteenth century witnessed a much higher estimate placed upon the individual human life than the ages before had seen. The rise of true democracy is modern and Christian. The democratic idea is only Christ's idea of the value of a single soul, but it has given birth to every republic upon earth, and has already greatly modified all other governments.

Further, all other standards of government are now tested by Christ. The distinguished Chinaman, Minister Wu, while he was the representative of China in the United States, made several notable speeches upon Confucianism, and he recognized by various comparisons that no higher defense of Confucianism was possible than to be able to say of it, that it was as good

as the teaching of Christ. All standards are today tested by the Christian standard. The world recognizes no higher code.

"O Lord and Master of us all!
Whate'er our name or sign,
We own Thy sway, we hear Thy call,
We test our lives by Thine."

The increase of Christ's government is seen further in the complete putting of human slavery under the ban of civilized public opinion throughout the world. The Christ idea of humanity is coming to the throne of humanity.

All that is good in modern socialism marks the increasing influence of the Christ spirit of human brotherhood. Significant also is the remarkable growth of the missionary spirit among the more favored Christian people of our day. Sign also of the increase of his kind of government and of peace among men is the continuing growth of the peace propaganda among the nations. And thus the time is surely hastened when God shall be incarnate in all, who shall remain in His presence, as He is incarnate in the Christ, and then the prophecy shall be fulfilled in the Christian love of every human being for every other, and the government shall fully be upon his shoulder.

IX

"IN CHRIST"

Jesus sought for every human being a vital, psychological union with himself. This was to be psychological rather than physical; mystical rather than literal or organic, but in any case vital, life-bringing and fruit-resulting. To open the way to the realization of such a union with himself Jesus revealed the Father to men and gave himself in prayer and self-renunciation to be a vicarious sacrifice in life and death for his fellow men. And Jesus expressed all this in the words "in me," or when Jesus and the Father were thought of as one then Jesus prayed for his disciples, "That they also may be in us." The union which Jesus sought was a union of aim, purpose, way, a fellowship of ambition, suffering, life, death and victory with himself.

This is one of John's great doctrines. John writes: "Hereby we know that we are in him: He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also to walk even as he walked" (1 John ii, 5, 6). To abide "in Christ," according to John, is "to walk even as he walked." John's hope of salvation for men was in their being "in Christ." Therefore "whosoever abideth in him sinneth not." Hereby we know that we are in him if we walk even as he also walked.

Paul's gospel has sometimes been regarded as a gospel of the resurrection. His own supreme ambition was that he might know Christ Jesus "and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, becoming conformed unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection from the dead" (Phil. iii, 10, 11). And all this he hoped to realize through being in Christ, "for whom," says he, "I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I might gain Christ, and be found in him," that is, in such complete harmony and fellowship with him that when God shall look upon him with approval that look will include Paul also, and when God shall show the power of the eternal life in Christ, that exhibition will, through Paul's being thus found in Christ, extend also to him. Paul believed that it would extend also to everyone who through Christ-like subordination of self for the good of others, and who through a voluntary refusal to be responsive to, or alive to, the things of self should die unto self in order to be responsive to and to live, as Christ did, unto God—to everyone who shall be thus found in Christ, that is, in such fellowship of purpose and will with Christ, to every such one Paul believed God would extend the same manifestation of resurrection power, the power of the eternal life, as unto Christ. "For," wrote Paul to the Colossians, "ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with him be manifested in glory" (Col. iii, 3, 4).

"In Christ." The preposition "in" (1) may refer to place relations, as in the same locality or place; (2) it may refer to temporal relations; (3) it may indicate figurative and personal relations. It is used in this latter sense in the phrase "in Christ," marking the close fellowship between the Christian and Christ.

J. Dick Fleming, in an illuminating article on the preposition "in" (Hastings' "Christ and the Gospels"), says: "The mystic realism of the Pauline and Johannine phrases is rather to be found in the fact that they approach the thought of a real identification with the Logos or the pneumatic Christ. The life divine incorporates itself in the Christian; the Spirit of Christ or of God takes the place of the human spirit, and is individualized in the life of believers. This idea of essential spiritual (mystica, hypostatica) union alone does justice to those passages where the union of believers with Christ, and even with one another, finds sublimest expression."

Instructive illustration of Paul's use of the phrase "in Christ" may be found in his words to the Romans, xiv, 14: "I am persuaded in the Lord Jesus," that is, in the virtue of that fellowship; when he writes: "Receive him in the Lord," that is, in the spirit of such fellowship (Phil. ii, 29); "I say the truth in Christ,"

that is, I speak the truth "as one united with Christ" (Rom. ix, 1).

The apostle sent a message to one of his preachers (Col. iv, 17): "Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it." To the Colossian Christians he wrote (Col. ii, 6, 7): "As therefore ye received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and builded up in him." To the Philippians he wrote: "Salute every saint in Christ Jesus" (iv, 21).

X

THE PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIAN PRAYER

The mystery of prayer is the mystery of all spiritual communication. From the human point of view this must ever remain a mystery defying all final explanation.

But insight into the identity of the mystery of prayer with the mystery of all communication of one spiritual person with another, will at once remove all inherent difficulty and doubt concerning prayer from the mind of everyone who believes that human individuals can communicate with each other. To any person who is conscious of the possibility of human fellowship, and who has faith to believe that the working of his own mind can be trusted in this regard, there need be no inherent doubt or difficulty concerning the fundamental problem of prayer.

But as it would be possible for us to imagine a person or persons who should live in a community and yet never enter into the blessed privilege of human fellowship, so it is possible for men and women to have their very life in the sustaining power of God, and yet they never enter into the high privilege of fellowship with God by prayer. This indeed has been and still

is true of a great portion of humanity. From the all-comprehending point of view of Him who is our Father in Heaven, His children have been and are, in great portion, sour and grumpy, and in deepest sense, unsocial because of sin.

If we will lift up our eyes that we may see and view all the race in its profoundest relationships, we shall find nothing more significant in the life of men than this fact of which I have just been speaking. Possibilities of fellowships eternity-long and as wide-reaching as the universe of God exist for every human soul. But because of sin, either one's own or others' sin, the millions are dumb and grumpy, sour and full of unbelief; God's children are walking upon God's great farm without an acquaintance with the Father; children in God's great family without the fraternal spirit.

Because of a neglect of these divine fellowships, which might be realized in prayer, men go on, therefore, and neglect earthly fellowships which would find their chief motive and support therein. And so hate and envy and feud and prejudice, bloodshed, oppression and war continue.

The purpose of Christ therefore has been to reconcile mankind unto the Father. From the Christian point of view to establish free fellowship with God, in the case of any individual, is to establish a life of prayer. Christ would have all men cease to be strangers and aliens from

God, and have them brought into communion with God, filled with the filial spirit, whereby they may know and communicate with God as their Father, and as a direct consequence, learn to know and have fellowship with each other as members of one great family, one brotherhood under the Fatherhood of God. This filial relationship between a soul and the Heavenly Father is begun and continued by prayer. And therefore the life of the Christian is distinctly a life of prayer.

And therefore, Jesus "spake a parable unto them to the end that they ought always to pray, and not to faint." Therefore Paul exhorteth Timothy "first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings, be made for all men." Therefore Paul also expressed his desire "that the men pray in every place, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and disputing." Therefore James wrote "Pray one for another." Therefore when the Lord visited Ananias, a disciple of Damascus, and directed him to go to the house of one Judas who lived on Straight Street, and to inquire for Saul of Tarsus, who had been converted while on his way to Damascus, he summed up the great and radical change which had taken place in the life of Saul in these comprehensive words—"for behold, he prayeth."

The place and mission of prayer in the life of the Christian may be further seen from a study of a lesson which Jesus taught his dis-

ciples on one occasion when he had finished praying in a certain place and one of them said unto him, "Lord, teach us to pray, even as John also taught his disciples." Jesus said to his disciples—"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." As Andrew Murray declares, "God's giving is inseparably connected with our asking" ("Min. of Intercession," p. 27). God can do for the person who prays what He can not do for the person who does not pray. Or, as would be the same proposition stated from a human view-point, the person who prays is able to receive from God what the person who does not pray is not able to receive.

It is also true that some of God's best gifts can be given only in answer to importunate prayer. That is, men can not receive some of God's best gifts except in answer to earnest, importunate prayer.

Further, prayer that is purely for personal ends can never be that profitable, ennobling reality which the poet calls "the Christian's vital breath." Christ prayed much but his was the prayer of intercession, of supplication, of thanksgiving for others. In praying for himself he never lost sight of the needs of a sin-sick humanity. Thus in prayer Jesus entered into a

complete and unobstructed, filial and loyal communion with the Father. His prayers were always according to God, in harmony with the divine will; they were always the prayers of the completely righteous one and, therefore, always answered, always effectual.

The same principle is true regarding all our praying. Christ has given in his gospel wonderful prayer-promises, but all these promises are carefully stated and are sure only when the conditions are met. The prayer to which Christ's promises apply is not heathen prayer. It is not for purely personal ends. It must be the expression of a certain kind of life.

And this suggests why some prayers are not answered. James writes: "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may spend it in your pleasures" (Jas. iv, 3). Selfish prayer can not find a way to the Father. The prayer that is for purely personal or selfish ends is not Christian prayer. Christ never promised that such prayers should be answered; it would be doing violence to the constitution of God's Kingdom. If we were to imagine God answering purely selfish prayers, we should have to imagine God as consenting to promote havoc and discord in His moral universe. God will not promote havoc and discord in His moral world. His high purpose is the establishment of peace and harmony between mankind and Himself, and between all men with one another. If you have prayed

and not received the answer to your prayers as you desired, it behooves you to ask yourself whether your prayers were truly Christian prayers. Remember the words of James to certain ones whose prayers were not answered:— "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may spend it in your pleasures."

What then is Christian prayer? What prayer can come within the Christ promise or declaration that it shall be answered? Too much of our praying is not Christian, even if it is not positively heathen, or an attempt to enlist God in the promotion of our own selfish purposes. Christian prayer shall be answered. But what is truly Christian prayer? It is prayer in Christ's name. To ask in Christ's name is "to ask a thing, as prompted by the mind of Christ and in reliance on the bond which unites us to him" ("Thayer's Lexicon," 248). For the use of the phrase, "in my name," see John xiv, 13, 14; xv, 16; xvi, 23; xxiv, 26.

Christian prayer must be offered "as prompted by the mind of Christ." It must be in harmony with Christ's high purpose to bring all who will be saved into a vital saving relation to the Father. Christ's prayers all had an atoning purpose, and looked toward the at-one-ment of all men with God, that so there might come ultimate peace and good will among men. When our prayers are in harmony with that high purpose they are then true Christian prayers and

they shall have a part with the prayers of Christ in the atonement of mankind with God. "If ye abide in me," is Christ's statement, "and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will and it shall be done unto you" (John xv, 7). We understand now what is meant by James: "The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working" (Jas. iv, 16). It is the life that abides in Christ, and that is in harmony with him, that can enlist divine power in the promotion of its purposes and the fulfillment of its desires.

But what shall be said for the one that has prayed long and earnestly for the conversion of loved ones who are still unconverted, possibly even ridiculing the prayers in their behalf? This we should say, that it is the desire of the great and loving heart of Christ that everyone who will may be saved and be brought into the most filial relationship with the Father.

But Christ and God cannot be thought of as doing violence to truth. God, Himself, can not coerce a human soul and at the same time treat it as free. If we were to imagine a soul forced into harmony with God we should have therewith to imagine the removal of the very elements necessary to that soul's salvation.

If your prayers, in the name of Christ, and as prompted by the mind of Christ, seem not to have been answered by the turning of your friends or loved ones to Christ, remember this,

that the desires of God and the prayers of Christ have all met with the same constitutional and inherent difficulties as your own.

Remember this also, that the atoning grace of God in Christ by the Spirit can overcome all obstacles and win every victory up to the point where to go further would be to break down the sovereignty of moral freedom, and thus, by forcing the soul, remove the very possibility of any attainment of the end sought. In all this we enter by prayer into the same great work as that in which the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are engaged. And the same conditions and rational limitations prevail with God as with us.

We need not be discouraged then if we seem to see our prayers unanswered. The way of eternal life with God is the way of Christ. The Christ way is the way of prayer. The Christian's vital breath is prayer. We are to pray for one another, and for all men. We are to enter into fellowship with God by prayer. We are to be intercessors for others, and, since God sends his best gifts to men by men, having sent the gift of eternal life by the man Christ Jesus, we are to receive from God, in answer to our prayers, gifts which we are to carry to others. Until Christians are willing to become intercessors in true Christian prayer for others, until Christians are willing to take the place of humble initiative, God can not bestow upon them,

or, from the human view-point, they can not receive those gifts (especially of the Holy Spirit, Luke xi, 13) which it is necessary that they should receive and carry to others both for their own and others' saving. So must we widen in our prayers until we take in all the world for and with Christ.

I fear we do not pray enough. I fear too that our prayers are not always Christian. We need to seek the Spirit to help us in our prayers, for we know not what to pray for unless the Spirit teach us. Let us pray as prompted by the mind of Christ, that so we may enter with Christ into the work of world redemption.

"And he spake a parable unto them to the end that they ought always to pray, and not to faint."

"Pray one for another."

"For behold, he prayeth."

XI

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE RELATION OF THE MESSIANIC HOPE TO THE ATTAINMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTEOUSNESS

We are coming to know that the aim of the philosopher is a systematic and comprehensive way of looking at things. By the processes of induction, facts are gathered. The ways in which things take place, the order of antecedence and sequence, and all concomitant variations, are observed and noted. The philosopher analyzes the facts, reflects upon them and gives to them what will purport to be a rational interpretation. The philosophy of the relation of the Messianic hope to the attainment of human righteousness will be, therefore, a much needed interpretation and explanation of the natural and normal relation of that hope to the attainment of such a righteousness.

Our philosophizing in the present case must run somewhat as follows. At some point very early in the history of the race sin entered the life of men, and with sin came a moral blinding, the natural result of such disloyalty to the natural human sense of right as was involved in that beginning of sin. This result was the natural curse from sin. But with the curse that

came upon the very beginning of sin came also the promise or hope of better things than utter loss.

Either that early and universal hope of essential Messiah was from God, or men have been hoping in God vainly all these ages. Nothing is more sure than that men have always believed that God loved righteousness rather than sin, but especially has this been true of that people whose hope of a deliverer was very early traced, in the traditions of their race, to what they believed to be the promise of God accompanying the deliverance of judgment upon the Tempter in Eden. The inspired writer of Genesis idealized the spiritual Tempter in Eden as a serpent, and he declares that God, when He pronounced judgment upon the Tempter, made this promise: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

Thus with man's first fall into sin came the foregleams of Messiah. Man rose from that first lapse into sin to go forth strengthened by the faith that God had in his heart the promise of better things, and the hope of that promise sustained him through many an hour of temptation and trial.

Very early a religious system of ritual and symbol was established which served to keep alive and nourish the hope of the Messianic rule and kingdom. Gradually, through the selec-

tion of moral fitness, the hope of the fulfillment of the promise became *relatively* narrowed to a single line. We read, therefore, the word of God to Abraham: "I will make thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: . . . And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. . . . And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. xii, 2, 3; xxii, 18). The Messianic hope has undoubtedly vaguely stirred in the breast of every people, but it is significant that most peoples have looked back to a golden age that was past. But in a remarkable degree the sons of Abraham proved themselves to be a people with faith enough in God to respond to the upward lift of a splendid hope. Under the teaching of Him who holdeth us all in his arms, this people, who could in spite of expulsion from Eden, in spite of disappointment and exile, yet believe in progress and keep their faces toward the future, have in a remarkable degree seen the hope of the fulfillment of the divine promise and have been thereby unified and nationalized, in spite even of dispersion, through the centuries.

Moses' interpretation of the promise of God was as follows: "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him" (Dt. xviii, 15). That promise of God spoken

to Moses, was delivered by Moses to the people when he said before the assembly of "all Israel," "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken" (Dt. xviii, 18). Through all the centuries that followed until the coming of Jesus that promise was the hope of Israel. The ultimate fulfillment of that hope became the inspiration and promise of all the prophets until Jesus came. When Jesus came it was manifest of him that he was "of a truth that prophet that should come into the world" (John vi, 14).

Again, humanity is distinguished from the brute by a capacity for the attainment of moral righteousness. Human righteousness is moral righteousness.

The Messianic hope was described by Paul as the hope of the promise of God made unto the fathers. We are inquiring at this time the relation of that hope to the progressive attainment of human righteousness.

The history of the moral progress of humanity may be regarded as dividing into three periods, (1) The Prehistoric, (2) The Legalistic and (3) The Christian. The conditions for the progressive attainment of human righteousness in the prehistoric period are, in the nature of the case, beyond the reach of the historian's investigation. What were the conditions of moral progress in Eden we can only in-

fer as we trace the later known conditions back into the period of the unknown. With regard to the conditions for the attainment of true righteousness which had to do in the lives of our first parents and the early members of our race we know very little. We do not even fully know what were the natural human endowments in the beginning of our race. We must rationally assume that there were given (1) a moral environment and (2) within each human life there was the power of response or moral adjustment to such environment.

With the earliest dawn of human history this moral environment, which as we have seen is one of the rationally assumed conditions for the attainment of human righteousness, had put on the character of the moral law. This law was presented as the commandment, and is the distinctive fact in the second or legalistic period in the history of the progressive attainment of human righteousness. During this legalistic period or dispensation of law the highest ideal righteousness within each human life was, naturally enough, conceived to be obedience—unreasoning, unquestioning obedience. The Spirit of Truth and moral longing after righteousness made use of the commandments and the law to deepen the sense of guilt within the human breast. Failure to measure up to the law was used by the Spirit to reveal the presence of sin. Therefore Paul could say, referring to his life

under the law, "I had not known sin, but by the law" (Rom. vii, 7).

But humanity is finite and limited, weak of will and frail of body, nervous and an easy prey to temptation, and the result has been that the more humanity has tried perfectly to keep the law and all the commandments, the deeper has become the conviction of sin and the sense of unavoidable guilt. So long as the mind of man conceived of the moral environment as consisting wholly of law, and of human righteousness as being perfect obedience to the law, just so long there could be possible to frail humanity no freedom from the sense of guilt, and no justification or peace within or without.

But we can not rationally conceive of God, after he had created men and had endowed them with such capacity for moral life and with such longing for ideal human righteousness,—we can not rationally conceive of God, after all of that, as then leaving the race to struggle on in hopeless despair of ever attaining the goal of moral righteousness. The holding of such a conception as if it were true would be to dishonor a moral God.

We are not surprised, therefore, that from the earliest period of known history we find mankind making two distinct lines of effort toward the attainment of human righteousness, which in its ultimate attainment shall bring peace and justification from all sin. I refer (1) To re-

ligious legalism and (2) To prophetism. Religious legalism was an effort to attain human righteousness by means of an absolute obedience to law. We have already seen how in a race like our own such an effort was sure to fail. It was nevertheless promotive of sturdy and heroic character and always stood for the conservative element both in individual and social life. But the Spirit of the living God would not leave man imprisoned in a moral environment of absolute law, faithful attempt to obey which would only lead to deeper despair. It is not strange, therefore, that the same Spirit, which at the first breathed a moral nature into man, should also very early whisper into the soul of man a promise. That promise spoke of better things than failure. It told of a time when the soul, incapable in its frailty of achieving by itself an absolute moral righteousness, should nevertheless attain to a moral righteousness which should be perfect according to the nature of man, even as the righteousness of God is perfect according to the nature of God.

It was the high mission of prophetism to keep alive and fan into a flame the hope of the fulfillment of that promise. The prophets of Israel were encouraged by that hope and they, in turn, stirred up all Israel to wait earnestly for the fulfillment of that hope. The hope was not only the hope of a line of prophets, as at first in Israel, but early it caught the fore-

gleams of the coming of "that prophet" who should himself become the real fulfillment of the world's hope, and who should so spiritualize the moral environment of men, so revolutionize men's ideals of human righteousness, that ever after there should be "no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, . . . who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. viii, 1–4).

Such, in broad outlines, was "the hope of the promise made of God" unto the fathers. Such was the Messianic hope of Israel, a vision of which gave substance to the message of all the prophets from the time of Moses to that of John the Baptist. Such was the hope so demonstrably fulfilled in Jesus, of whom Moses and all the prophets prophesied, and in complete response to whom thousands and millions of earth's sin-discouraged souls, since his coming, have found peace and joy, and, being made free from sin, have become free servants of God, having their fruit unto righteousness, and the end everlasting life. Before the coming of Jesus, the hope of Messiah, the Messianic hope of Israel and of the World, was manifestly unfulfilled. But since Jesus came there has been no pure and noble aspiration of the human heart after peace and moral righteousness that he could not satisfy.

In the history of man's progressive attainment of moral righteousness nothing is more

clearly demonstrated than that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah foretold by the prophets, and the fulfillment of the Messianic hope. He, above all others, was "that prophet," whom God promised, who should be like unto Moses, and unto him the people were to hearken. Jesus was like unto Moses, and yet Moses could never have become the world's hope, as is Jesus. "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John i, 17).

We have thus looked upon the philosophy of the relation of the Messianic hope to the progressive attainment of human righteousness. And thus do we not see how close has been the relation of that hope to the attainment of human righteousness? That hope was for ages the luminous fore-gleam of human, moral possibilities, and it kept the soul of man from giving up in despair. And in its fulfillment it has so spiritualized the moral atmosphere of human life as to render possible that which was before impossible, even bringing to pass "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. viii, 4).

XII

THE BIBLE—WHAT IS CLAIMED FOR IT

The Christian world makes the astounding claim that the Christian Bible is not only a unique book in literature, but that in a wholly unique sense it was given by inspiration of God.

The Christian's claim, upon which the whole fabric of his hope depends, is nothing less than that the Bible contains a sufficient, and the only sufficient, revelation of God's will and disposition toward men, and of man's right relation toward God, and that it is "also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work."

It is not claimed that the Bible was inspired in any particular manner. All the Christian world is agreed that the Bible was divinely inspired, but it is not agreed as to any special theory of inspiration.

Neither is it claimed that all of the Bible is of equal value. Long statistical lists in the Books of Chronicles are not as profitable for teaching as are the lofty anthems of the Psalmist or the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah.

God has given a message in the Bible which

man's uninspired wisdom could not have discovered, but in the conveying of that message human agents were employed. It is not claimed that they were always free from error. In this sense the Bible is certainly not inerrant. But let quibblers and doubters and disturbed believers remember that the Bible was never intended for a text book in geology—and yet the most essential element in the modern scientific theory of creation was written down by a Jew three thousand years before the birth of modern science, and he said then what modern science repeats to-day: "In the beginning God created."

In the Bible God did not write to the geologist as a geologist, nor to the chemist as a chemist, nor to the mineralogist as a mineralogist, nor to the astronomer as an astronomer, but rather did He write to man as man. The Bible is God's fullest word to the soul. In it God has revealed to man the divine will and purpose touching human destiny. In the Bible God has told us that about Himself which nature never told to any man, but which we needed to know. We could have learned that God was creator and, possibly, that He was the ruler of the world, but without special revelation no one ever came to know that God is love and that He careth for men better than an earthly father can care for his own children. Thereby God has justified His ways unto men and has satisfied the responding human soul with fatness.

No one who will view the Bible as containing God's progressive revelation to the human soul, which message culminates in Jesus Christ, will be able to place the finger of criticism upon a single place where real improvement could be made. And it is insisted, without any fear of successful contradiction, that, when the Bible is thus viewed within the manifest scope of the divine purpose, it will be found to be absolutely without error.

It is not claimed that there is no truth in other books of religion, but it is claimed that the only sufficient and adequate revelation for the soul's needs is contained in the Bible. The sacred books of the world are to-day known and read of men, and every one of them except the Christian Bible is manifestly inadequate. With the advance of science, knowledge and light, these must decrease while the Bible continues to increase.

The Bible more than any other book is an all-man's-book. It speaks to the soul. It has a message for the untutored savage, and the man of the university can never get beyond it. It speaks to all ages and conditions and tells that which nature never told—that God is our Father and that we are the children of His care. It is the most all-pervasive book known among men, and it brings to all, who will receive its message, a knowledge of the infinite grace of God revealed in Jesus the Christ.

What has the Bible not been? And what is it not to-day in art, in literature, in law, in ethics? Whenever an artist would dip his brush in immortality he covers his canvas with a scene from its pages. When John Bunyan would write for the centuries and also for the multitudes he must take for his hero a Bible pilgrim. When John Ruskin would write the finest English of his century he must learn his style and gain the inspiration for his message from the English Bible. Righteous law must trace its beginning to Moses, and its culmination to the Sermon on the Mount. The Bible doctrine of the universal Fatherhood of God and the consequential universal brotherhood of man is the foundation doctrine of ethics at the beginning of the twentieth century. The cause of this so great and beneficial influence must be adequate to the effect. It is nothing less than the character of divine authority given to the Scriptural words of grace and revelation by their primary and originating author—God.

The gift of eternal life comes through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Inspiration comes of the Holy Spirit; and that which is most "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness," comes through the mediumship of the Holy Bible. The Bible is not as profitable as some other books for instruction in geology, or physics, or mechanics, or surgery, or astronomy, but it is the most

profitable book ever known among men for instruction "which is in righteousness." And since instruction in righteousness must ever be essential to the conserving of the civilization which we have, and to the further progress of the race, therefore, it may be truly said that next to the gift of God's Son, by whom comes life, and next to the gift of the Holy Spirit, by whom comes the desire to live that life nobly and well, is God's gift of the Bible, by which we may ever learn how to make the most for time and eternity of the life inspired, which God has granted through the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Finally, if you are not Christian, or if you think you do not believe the Bible, will you pass judgment upon a book the contents of which you do not know? Surely it would be more reasonable, and more to your own best interest, to study the book which looms so large in the past and present of the world's best thought and achievement.

Certainly every Christian should faithfully study this book, so pre-eminent for wise and beneficent instruction in all righteousness.

Fathers and mothers should study the Bible themselves, and teach it to their children around the family altar. So may righteousness be conserved and promoted and the truth of God be known among men.

XIII

ORIGIN OF THE NEW TESTAMENT AND THE FIXING OF THE CANON

It is probable that a majority of the persons who believe in the teachings of the New Testament could not give a reasonably historical account of its origin; nor could they tell how the New Testament Canon came to be fixed as it is. And yet in a day when faith calls for the uncovering of historical foundations as never before, such knowledge could not but prove steadying and helpful to the faith of many. Let us consider, then, first, the origin of the New Testament, and, second, the fixing of the New Testament Canon.

In the first place, it must be remembered that the apostolic age was not a time of making books, and when a book was made its extensive publication involved the prolonged labors of the copyist. If we also bear in mind that for at least a generation after the manifestation of our Lord there were those yet living who had been eyewitnesses of the events of his earthly ministry, we shall see that it was only natural that tradition should be highly esteemed among early Christians as a source of information regarding Christian history and teaching. Papias, who wrote during the early part of the second

century, says: "If I met with anyone who had been a follower of the elders anywhere, I made it a point to inquire what were the declarations of the elders; what was said by Andrew, Peter, or Philip; what by Thomas, James, John, Matthew, or any other of the disciples of our Lord; what was said by Aristion, and the Presbyter John, disciples of the Lord; for I do not think that I derived so much benefit from books as from the living voice of those that are still surviving" ("Eusebius," Book iii, chap. 39).

However, the weakness of all hearsay evidence attaches to tradition, and the farther we get from the original source the more apparent this becomes. Therefore, it soon became necessary for the preservation of the Christian teaching, pure and undefiled, that those matters which had thus far been held as authentic tradition should be transferred to writing. Luke tells us in the preface to his Gospel that "many had taken in hand" to do this. It is also essentially Luke's own reason for writing The Gospel.

Another class of writings early played an important rôle in the growing life and thought of the church. It was a custom prevalent among the early bishops and leaders of the church to address letters to distant churches in which they might for any particular reason be interested. This is the manner in which a large part of the New Testament came into existence. It was customary to read these letters to the churches

in the public congregations. Eusebius quoted from a letter of Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, written to Soter, bishop of Rome, as follows: "To-day we have passed the Lord's holy day, in which we have read your epistle, in reading which we shall always have our minds stored with admonition, as we shall, also, from that written to us before by Clement" (Book iv, chap. 23). It is said of Dionysius; "But he was most useful to all in the catholic epistles that he addressed to the churches." Paul ordered the Thessalonians that his letter to them should "be read unto all the holy brethren" (1 Thess. v, 27).

It was also customary for these letters to circulate among the churches. In Paul's letter to the Colossians he says: "And when this letter is read among you, cause that it also be read in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea" (Col. iv, 16). How the Christian world would go into excitement if that letter of Paul to the Laodiceans should be found! The book called Pastor, though a disputed writing, and one which did not finally find a place in the Canon, also is mentioned by Eusebius as having been "in public use" in the churches (Book iii, chap. 3).

So much as to the origin of certain early Christian writings. What was it that raised the question of their authorship or canonicity into real importance? The answer must be, heresy within the church and heathenism without.

Quite early it became apparent that the law of self-preservation demanded that catholic Christianity should present a united front. The great and apparent need of the church soon came to be a standard upon which catholic or universal Christianity might substantially agree, and to which appeal might be made, to determine the true scope and contents of the Christian system, as against the corrupting influence of heresy within the church and the manifold assaults of heathenism without. Christian scholars gave earnest study to this subject. The experience and usage of the wide-spreading church were carefully investigated. Such great theologians as Origen and Irenæus furnished important contributions to the discussion. Certainly before the end of the second century the church at large had come to substantial agreement concerning the books which might be accepted as authoritative Christian Scriptures; and the books thus accepted constituted the New Testament Canon.

In the nature of the case one would not expect upon this subject absolute agreement. Eusebius published his Ecclesiastical History as late as 320 A.D. He mentions a large number of books which were then regarded as of doubtful authorship and canonicity. By a careful reading of Eusebius I have found that, among the books which more than two centuries after

the death of all the apostles were yet counted by some as at least of doubtful canonicity, were the following which finally found a place in the New Testament Canon: The Epistle to the Hebrews; the Epistle of James; the Second Epistle of Peter; the Second and Third Epistles of John; the Epistle of Jude, and the Book of Revelation. And the following which in the time of Eusebius were still of doubtful canonicity did not finally find a place in the New Testament Canon: The Epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians; the Epistle of Barnabas; the Pastor of Hermas; the Apocalypse of Peter; the Institutions of the Apostles; the Acts of Paul; the Gospel according to the Hebrews; the Acts of Peter, and the Gospel according to Peter.

Some time after Eusebius the church took it in hand to close the Canon. The Council of Laodicea in 363 A.D. declared that only "canonical" books should be read in the churches. The test of canonicity has always been the acceptance or rejection of any book by the church. Upon the most essential records of the New Testament the church has maintained substantial agreement. The less essential records have sometimes been disputed. Christians everywhere believe that the best that the inspiration of the apostolic age could furnish is preserved in the canonical books of the New Testament. Who that has compared the New Testament with

other writings of the early Christian era can doubt but that the Holy Spirit guided in the selection of the writings which should constitute the Christian Word of God to men?

XIV

A CONVICTION ABOUT SIN

A correct view of sin is exceedingly important. It has been estimated that ninety per cent. of all doctrinal errors have come from defective views of sin. When one's sense of sin breaks down, his sense of righteousness will become lopsided and lean. A man who does not believe in sin is a man who, if he is consistent, does not believe in righteousness. It is impossible to conceive of goodness except as it is conceived as over against the idea of badness.

How great shall be one's appreciation of redemption through Christ will be determined by the degree of his appreciation of need through sin. If humanity is not undone in sin, then the work of Christ is a delusion, and there is no salvation, since there is no need of any. If there is no sin then Christ was wrong, and all the prophets and all the reformers, who have burned with zeal for righteousness have been mistaken, and the conscience of humanity has strangely erred.

If there is no sin, then there is no hell. If there is no hell, then there is no heaven. Hell is the state of those who have disobeyed their God-given conscience; that is, hell is the state of those who have sinned. Heaven is the state

of those who have obeyed their God-given conscience; that is, it is the state of those who have done righteousness. But there is no one who has not come under the guilt of sin. All who have sinned need a Saviour, but none others do.

It has been said that ours is a time when the sense of sin rests very lightly upon the consciences of men. If that is true, is it also true that any real sense of righteousness must rest lightly upon us? Should it not be remembered that when sin shall have ceased to be hideous, then righteousness will have lost its glory?

The religious faculty is natural in all men, but it does not manifest itself in the same way among all. There have been peoples among whom there was little, if any, trace of sin-consciousness. Scholars say that this was true in Egyptian literature. They also tell us that the poetry of Homer contains no villain.

A definite work of the Spirit of Truth in every age has been to bring to men a conviction about sin, and after that about righteousness. Ritual and symbol have been used, commandments have been given, psalmists have sung, prophets have warned, and judgment has been visited upon transgressors for the very purpose of creating such a sense of the hideousness and guilt of sin as should prepare the way for all true penitents to receive salvation and life. The man who has no sense of the death-dealing character of sin can have no sense of his own need of divine help.

Therefore, it is not strange that the first elements in the Biblical revelation pertain to sin. And this revelation is clearly intended to create in humanity an abiding sense of the terrors and devastations of sin, and to promote a sense of guilt for sin. It has been thus that the law, which has approved itself to the human conscience, has been the instrument of the Spirit of Truth to teach men the reality of sin. Therefore, Paul declared: "I had not known sin, but by the law" (Rom. vii, 7). And Christ saw that a special work of the Spirit when he should come to the church after Pentecost, would be to bring to the world a conviction about sin: "And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin" (John xvi, 8).

As a natural result of the Biblical revelation about sin, and of the consequent sense of sin among men, the Bible has well been called "a book of great penitents." Such were David, Isaiah and Paul. Since Bible times, under the special illumination of the Spirit, naturally enough we have had such great penitents as Augustine, Luther, Bunyan, Wesley and Moody. These have been great seekers of life and salvation for themselves and for the world only as they have first been brought under tremendous and abiding conviction of their own and of the world's need.

The forms of the manifestation of a conviction about sin have been as various as have been

the temperaments and conditions of men. We need care little for the form which the manifestation of the sense of sin shall assume, whether it shall be the jerks, visions, voices, fear of hell, dread of displeasing friends, crying, groaning, or any other of the many forms which have been seen in the past, or which may be seen in the future. But this should never be forgotten, that they who would hope to see the glory of righteousness must somehow first have seen the hideousness of sin.

The revelation of the grace of God and the mission of Christ Jesus and the purpose of moral heroes since the world began have been to save the world from the deceitfulness and ruin of sin. Every moral aspiration, every hymn of praise, every true prayer, every philanthropic institution, every endeavor toward reform and every true Christian church throughout the world means, if it means anything, a desire to be saved from "The wrath of God" that "abideth" upon all indolence, shiftlessness, unthankfulness, refusal to have God in all one's thoughts, a denial of human brotherhood, indifference to human misery, and upon all sin, and to save the world from such.

The world everywhere, then, should learn, and the church not forget, that if men and women are to know God and his righteousness they must somehow be deeply convinced of sin and their own consequent need. Let it not be forgotten,

then, that only where there is an abiding conviction about sin can there be any expectation of an abiding appreciation of the grace of God in Christ. Men need everywhere a conviction about sin in order that they may have a conviction about righteousness, and judgment, and God.

XV

THE PHILOSOPHY OF RETRIBUTION

The making of heaven or hell takes place under the working of the one comprehensive law of retribution. Hell may no longer be thought of as a place where an angry God puts the souls of those who may have aroused His wrath; nor is it a place where He puts those who were unconditionally condemned to its torments before the world was made. Heaven is not a place reserved for those who were in some unconditional way elected to its glories ages ago. Both of these ideas have been widely held in some periods of the past. The great part of the Christian world do not so believe to-day. Neither is hell a place warmed by the fires of burning brimstone, though such unspiritual and materialistic notions were in certain times widely held. Nor is heaven a city in which the streets are paved with gold, though such unspiritual and materialistic notions of heaven have all too largely prevailed in the past.

As symbols and figures of description of that which will abide when all that is physical is done away, fire or golden pavements are all very good. Indeed it is necessary to use just such symbols whenever we wish to speak of and describe the

characters of the non-physical and invisible facts of life and environment. Who can find a word that will do better in thought expression than to say of love that it grows cold or is warm? We know what is meant when one says of another—"he is an all-round man," and then perhaps of the same person it may be said—"he is four-square from the ground up." Why is it that we should have no trouble to understand these figurative expressions in any field of human knowledge except that of religion? Why do we understand what is meant when one is warned to keep away from certain people unless he would get burned, but do not understand what is meant when Jesus should warn us to avoid a certain kind of life unless we would fall into the fires of hell which are the fires of retribution or of consequences? Why do we understand figurative language as figurative in the one instance, but not in the other?

The world is coming to understand what Jesus meant when he said: "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo, here! or, There! for lo, the kingdom of God is within you" (Lk. xvii, 20, 21). The world is coming to understand that heaven is within one, or hell is within one, as the case may be. And whether it shall be heaven or hell within one is to be determined by one for one's self under the one all-comprehending law of the soul's retribution. And that law itself in every

case is an expression of God's unchanging justice, fairness and love.

So then heaven is as real as ever, but in a real sense every man must make his own heaven in compliance with the law of retribution which is also the law of consequences. So also hell is as real as ever, but in a true sense every man, who suffers in hell, makes his own hell under the same necessary, and divinely-gracious law of the soul's retribution. As a scriptural and philosophical statement of this universal law of retribution I have selected two passages from the inspired writings: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life" (Gal. vi, 7, 8); and "he that is steadfast in righteousness shall attain unto life; and he that pursueth evil doeth it to his own death" (Prov. xi, 19). No law of life can be of more practical or stirring importance to all of us than this one of the soul's retribution. For just so sure as heaven is the fitting destiny for the righteous, so sure, under this law, are the selfish, the impure and the unrighteous making hell for the destiny and final state of their souls.

But while all this is of real importance to all persons, yet it is of greatest importance to those who are still young in years, and especially to

those who are still in the great formative period of life, from twelve to twenty or twenty-five years of age. John Ruskin once addressed the students of a military college, and in that address he urged the great need of thoughtfulness and careful consideration of this law of consequences on the part of youth. Mr. Ruskin said: "I have no patience with people who talk of 'the thoughtlessness of youth' indulgently. I had infinitely rather hear of thoughtless old age, and the indulgence due to *that*. When a man has done his work, and nothing can be materially altered in his fate, let him neglect his task and jest with his fate if he will; but what excuse can you find for thoughtlessness and willfulness at the very time when all future fortune hangs on your decisions? A youth thoughtless! when his whole career depends on the opportunity of a moment! A youth thoughtless! when all the happiness of his home depends on his self-mastery and control of his passions now! A youth thoughtless when his every act is as a torch to fire the laid train of future consequences, and when every imagination is a fountain of life or of death! No! young men, be thoughtless in *any* after years, rather than now—though, indeed, there is only one place when a man may be safely and blamelessly thoughtless—and that is his deathbed. No thinking should be left to be done there." (*Methodist Review*, March 1905, p. 325).

Let every young person, especially, know and consider that with the glorious opportunity that has come to win true life and make heaven one's final destiny, has come, as involved therein, the necessity of making either heaven or hell for one's future home. In the making of one or the other all of us are now engaged. If your life is thoughtless and selfish, loving pleasure more than God, then are you minding the things that are vain and making a hell within you that shall burn with the fires of remorse as long as the soul remains to recognize its loss of love, and fellowship and God. No hell can be conceived that can be worse than that.

A selfish, loveless, pleasure-loving prince is said to have been given a beautiful palace in which to live. The palace had no windows opening out to the world where people dwelled, but beautiful gardens filled an inner court which was surrounded by the palace. The court was open to the sky. The prince was confined in this palace. It seemed to him at first very pleasant, but gradually the open space of the inner court appeared to become smaller. Finally it seemed as if he would be crushed to death in the gradually contracting space. He looked for help. But no help could come from any direction but from above. Finally he looked above and there was his own elder brother waiting to help him to escape from that place of intolerable narrowness. He was a prisoner and his story is a

parable. His own unsocial and loveless disposition had shut him in a palace in which no windows opened to the world of humanity without. His selfishness had suggested many pleasant things for him within the palace for his lonely pleasure. Self-centered and selfish, unsocial and loveless, his palace walls began to narrow until finally it was a question of being crushed to death or of being helped from above. Jesus, the lover of the human soul, reached down into his prison house of sin and selfishness the hand of love and fellowship, and he grasped the hand and was saved. He was making hell for himself, and his selfish pride had already shut him off from any possibility of effectual help or rescue except by the hand of Jesus let down from above to touch him back to love and fellowship. Milton says: "The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven." That prince with such splendid environment and with such opportunity of making heaven within him had already gone far in making hell for himself, and was only rescued through the vitalizing and redemptive fellowship with Jesus which he fortunately accepted before it was finally too late.

The Palace of Art, described by Tennyson, was the gilded hell which the builder constructed for his own selfish, loveless soul. It was selfishly designed for the purpose of self-culture and proud refinement. But the poverty and loss which come through living with no thought for

others were forgotten, and, therefore, under the sure law of retribution, the inevitable consequences of living such a loveless and unsocial life were sure to follow. The psychological law is unfailing. The builder of such a palace is ever the maker of his own hell. The philosophy of retribution is clear. He who is wise will be urged thereby to a life of service, not for self but for others, the sure and appropriate destiny of which is heaven and the fellowship of heaven.

XVI

A BRIEF EXAMINATION OF SPENCER'S DEFINITION OF EVOLUTION

In this essay it is not purposed to set forth an exposition of the Synthetic Philosophy, or even of the theory of Evolution. That would widen too much the limits of the present examination. Nor is it purposed to enter into a full criticism of Mr. Spencer's First Principles. It is fully recognized that for half a century the name of Herbert Spencer has ranked high among the leaders of human thought. It may be doubted if the thinking of any other man has left so deep an impression upon the scientific, religious and philosophic thought of the last generation. The author of the Synthetic Philosophy was a great systematizer of human knowledges. He claimed to think meanly of metaphysics but he was himself, nevertheless a metaphysician. The characteristic greatness of his work was, however, as a systematizer of observed facts; its marked weakness was in a faulty underlying metaphysics. He assumed that truth to be known must belong to the phenomenal, which meant that it must be picturable. This of course banishes by hypothesis all rational metaphysics into the realm of the unknowable. Nevertheless in great degree the

Synthetic Philosophy was developed with conscious reference to laws and principles of the so-called Unknowable. Spencer insisted that the reasonings of his system furnished no support either to the materialistic or to the idealistic (which he calls "spiritualistic") hypothesis touching the ultimate nature of being. Touching the materialist and the spiritualist hypotheses he says: "Their implications are no more materialistic than they are spiritualistic; and no more spiritualistic than they are materialistic." In trying to get free from metaphysics of any sort Spencer fell a victim to a bad metaphysics. His doctrine of the unknowable ground of the known is clearly a metaphysical doctrine not less than is Kant's doctrine of the noumenal reality.

Spencer was as sure of the existence of the Unknowable as he was that it is unknowable. He says: "Common sense asserts the existence of a reality; objective science proves that this reality can not be what we think it; subjective science shows why we can not think of it as it is and yet are compelled to think of it as existing; and in this assertion of a reality utterly inscrutable in nature, religion finds an assertion essentially coinciding with her own. We are obliged to regard every phenomenon as a manifestation of some power by which we are acted upon; though omnipresence is unthinkable." If only that is thinkable which can be pictured then is omnipresence unthinkable, but it may well be

that in just this is its distinction, namely, that it is not picturable but is only thinkable. Common sense metaphysics can not picture omnipresence, infinity or the absolute, but all these are proper objects for a rational metaphysics.

As related to the foregoing, we notice Spencer's discussion of the "persistence of force," which looms large in his thinking. He says: "By the persistence of force we really mean the persistence of some cause which transcends our knowledge and conception. In asserting it we assert an unconditional reality without beginning or end.

"Thus, quite unexpectedly, we come down once more to that ultimate truth in which, as we saw, religion and science coalesce. On examining the data underlying a rational theory of things, we find them all at last resolvable into that datum without which consciousness was shown to be impossible—the continued existence of an unknowable as the necessary correlative of the knowable.

"The sole truth which transcends experience by underlying it is thus the persistence of force. This being the basis of experience must be the basis of any scientific organization of experiences. To this an ultimate analysis brings us down, and on this a rational synthesis must build up." It should be noted here that in the field of rational metaphysics the idealist finds this "unknowable" by rational inference to be absolute free intelligence. For him the absolute

"which transcends experience by underlying it" is rationally known to be free intelligence; spaceless, timeless, self-existing, self-directing agent; free intelligence. With this difference of premise the idealist would say with the words of Spencer, that "This being the basis of experience must be the basis of any scientific organization of experiences. To this an ultimate analysis brings us down, and on this a rational synthesis must build up."

In Spencer's view "philosophy is completely unified knowledge." If science is to be viewed as "classified knowledge," then, according to this definition, science and philosophy would be one and the same. Science and philosophy, as thus conceived, may not go beyond the bounds of inductive investigation. When the scientist or philosopher, as thus conceived, assumes to interpret the ultimate truth of facts gathered by the inductive process, he is out of his sphere. Confusion at this point has been the source of much profitless worry and debate in the scientific, philosophical and religious fields. More properly understood, science gathers and classifies the facts which come within the reach of human observation and experience; philosophy interprets these according to the rational implications and conclusions to which the laws of thought naturally and properly lead. Thus there need be no conflict between science and philosophy, and

both may buttress and support a rational and holy faith.

Spencer thought of himself as an evolutionist, and it is as an evolutionist that he will be longest remembered by the world. In the Synthetic Philosophy the task which the author took upon himself was nothing less than the giving to the world of a "completely unified knowledge." The universal law under which Spencer believed all knowledge might be thus unified was formulated by him as follows: "*Evolution is an integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion; during which the matter passes from an indefinite incoherent homogeneity to a definite coherent heterogeneity; and during which the retained motion undergoes a parallel transformation.*"

Concerning this celebrated formula it is desired to ask frankly two questions: (1) What does it mean? and (2) is it valid for the understanding? It is not now our purpose to controvert, but only to analyze and understand. And, first of all, it would seem, from the language used, as if it were intended to be merely a cosmic formula, having reference only to the material world of matter. The language used would seem to preclude any other application. We will not consider here the problem involved in such a universal application of the law of evolution, as thus stated, as Spencer undertook to

make in the various fields of ethics, sociology, psychology, religion, though it would be interesting to inquire into the metaphysical presuppositions of his reasonings in these fields.

Our present examination must not be so comprehensive. What then is the meaning of the formula of evolution, as stated by Spencer? What is an *integration?* It is defined as being some sort of a change of a manifold into something simple. It is the reduction of chaos (whatever that may mean), to form and order.

But we have here, by definition, an *integration of matter.* What kind of matter? In the next clause we learn that the matter *assumed* is "an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity." But in what sense is it "indefinite"? And in what sense "incoherent"?

Is matter here studied as to its *phenomenal* character or as to its *metaphysical?* If as to its phenomenal character, then we have an attempted *description of a process,* and certain chaotic, formless, mutually unrelated bits of one kind of matter (which is a description unwarranted in reason, since we may not affirm so much as "homogeneity" of matter which is really "indefinite, incoherent") are said to change into orderly, simple, formful, related bits of different kinds of matter, and during the change there is said to be a loss of some motion, and the motion which is retained is said to be changed from

an indefinite, orderless, and directionless kind of motion into a definite, orderly motion.

It would appear then that the definition, properly understood, can have little or no certain meaning, even if it is to be understood as describing a phenomenal process, since the basal assumption, namely, "an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity," is impossible for clear thought. We can not rationally affirm "homogeneity" of matter which is really "indefinite" and "incoherent," and we can not affirm of a "homogeneity" that it is really "indefinite" and "incoherent."

On the other hand, if the definition looks deeper than to the description of a mere process to something metaphysical, then we have more questions to ask as to the basal assumption with which the definer begins. Matter assumed, we have again to ask, What kind of matter? We are told that it is "an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity." If now "indefinite" means *without form*, and if "incoherent" means *without mutual gravitation*, we would have our matter stripped of everything but just pure being. Now whether pure being is a homogeneity or not we need not attempt to say. Of pure being we can affirm nothing for we can know nothing of it. For human thought the content of pure being equals nothing. Now how nothing can evolve into something is a great mystery, and it is one which the empiricists on the sense

plane can not escape. The common sense empiricist metaphysician, if his primal assumption of being is granted, must not expect to find anything in the sequent that was not in some way in pure being, the antecedent. If he could find anything in the sequent which was not in some way in the antecedent (pure being) that something would itself be a "groundless becoming" ("Theory of Thought and Knowledge," by Bowne, page 94).

Neither will the assumption of a "potential energy" in the antecedent help out. If actual actuality in the sequent is anything more than potential actuality assumed in the antecedent then something really new has been added in the process, which can not be, since, if so, that something new thus added would be a groundless becoming.

There is no way out of this difficulty upon the mechanical and sense plane. A thing can not *be* and *not be* at the same time, and, upon the sense plane, that which is *not* can never become that which *is*. Thus we see that upon the sense plane we could never be able to get such an evolution as that assumed to be defined.

But let us assume the process to be started. Let motion be assumed. The last clause of the definition assumes that this motion is at first indefinite, directionless, purposeless. Upon the mechanical and sense plane what could ever make it otherwise? If motion were not *assumed* how

could it be gotten? How could it be dissipated when once gotten? Again, that which is *not* can never become that which *is*.

We conclude that the definition under examination can have no real meaning for clear thought, and hence no real validity for the understanding; not even as an explanation or description of a process viewed merely as phenomenal.

As a metaphysical explanation of the world it remains upon the sense plane, and can have no validity. It does not explain how that which is *not* can ever become that which *is*, a provision for which must underlie any valid explanation of the world. We think that Professor Bowne suggests the true metaphysical explanation, which is "to refer all motion, progress, development, evolution, to a supreme self-determination which ever lives and ever founds the order of things."

XVII

"WE ALL ARE PROPHETS"

We all are prophets of a lesser size;
And some are nobly statured, bold and high,
Who in the universe of God are wise
To read His thought for future age, as nigh.

'Tis said there are no prophets but in Bible ken,
That God full truth vouchsafed to servants ages past,
But now no longer speaks with creature man as then;
And yet no falser libel ere on God were cast.

For he who thinks the thought of God, ere yet 'tis done,
Speaking forth with fearlessness,
Is nothing less than God's inspired one,—
Prophet—forthteller—of His righteousness.

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